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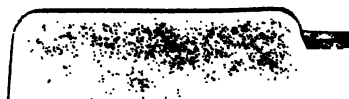
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THE DOMESTIC MANNERS

AND

PRIVATE LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

By JAMES HOGG.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR, NOTES, &c.

MDCCCXXXIV.

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PREFACE.

BY whatever means the following sketch came into the hands of its editor, its paternity is certain; it fathers itself: none but James Hogg could write it. Indeed it is almost as valuable for the light it throws upon his literary history, as for what it communicates relative to Sir Walter Scott. "Dear Sir Walter," says James, "ye can never suppose that I belang to your school o' chivalry? ye are the king o' that school, but I'm the king o' the mountain and fairy school, which is a far higher ane nor yours." We think we hear Sancho Panza arguing that his governorship of Barrataria is a far higher office than Don Quixote's knightly power of bestowing kingdoms.

Nevertheless, as we have no doubt, as indeed we are quite certain that Sancho, had he set himself about it, would have furnished by far the best biography of his master, so we think James's anecdotes by far the most illustrative of Sir Walter's

character that we have seen. It is a strange muddy piece of water in which the great poet's image is reflected, still it *is* his image that is reflected. Most scribblers about him have only been trying what fine things they could say. Distorted although honest James does see many things through the medium of his vanity,—nay, given to “leeing” though he sometimes be, in a small way, still his narrative has a smack of nature about it. It gives us much such a notion of Sir Walter as Wedgewood images do of the great originals from which they are copied. Nay, the impression produced upon Hogg will sometimes enable the reader, if he has studied Sir Walter's soul in his own writings, to guess pretty near the truth.

We talk lightly on the subject, but we are far from thinking that this rude chalk sketch has any thing of a caricature about it. Sir Walter is seen to advantage in it. “Making allowance for the wind,” as Locksly says, we recognize his very lineaments. He is there both in his strength and in his weakness. We see him caracoling across the wild heaths of “the south *hielands*,” laughing with glee as he wades “up to the oxters,” in his fishing excursion, in the exuberance of his spirits, sinking a boat to duck his companions and thinking it an excellent joke. Then, again, we see him in his hours of depression, from his severe bilious indisposition, a sufficient apology for certain inequa-

lities of temper. In his more happy moods we see him overflowing with kindness, yet always shrewd —always Scotch and cautious. In his less amiable fits we see him annoyed even by the remarks of "The Spy," or feeling the contradiction of the author of the "Brownie of Bodsbeck." We see too the mind which, in the details of life, and in the delineation of character, evinced so much practical sense, as much enthralled by the dreams of a by-gone age as the great knight of La Mancha himself.

This is a point in Sir Walter's character which is well worthy of note; it shows how the strongest minds if they "get a thraw" in youth are precisely those that retain it most stubbornly. Sir Walter was sung into a reverence for aristocracy in his cradle. He grew up amid the first fervent glow of the anti-gallican spirit. His sympathies received a bent which his feudalised imagination led him to cherish and exaggerate, instead of seeking to counteract it. He felt the glamour of caste dispersing like mist before the sun, and he sought to wrap the elusive mantle round our hills again. It was this that made him take pleasure in enacting the feudal baron at Abbotsford. It was this that made him cling to those great families with which he claimed clanship. It was this that made him take pride even in a questionable alliance with nobility. It was this that made him happy amid the

tou-fooleries of the king's welcome to Edinburgh. It was this that in his latter day, when his mind was enfeebled by disease, caused him to be haunted by the dread of a violent and bloody revolution. Sir Walter Scott was, in some respects, a Horace Walpole on a greater scale, throwing a heart into his play; his greater depth of feeling, his more powerful intellect and passions, render that in him tragical, which in the other was only ludicrous.

A great degree of coarse strong graphic talent will not be denied to the following sketch. Sir Walter is brought bodily before us, with all his peculiarities of look and gesture.

There are some inaccuracies in what is narrated of the minor persons of the drama which must be corrected; but not yet while so many survive whom truths, only valuable as affording an insight into character, might pain. The day may come, however, when certain small circles which attempted to catch a borrowed light from the proximity of a great man, may become matter of history.

SKETCH

OF THE

SHEPHERD'S LIFE.

THOSE persons who, by the force of genius, have overcome the difficulties attending an humble origin, or have risen above the disadvantages of a defective education, have always been very properly considered extraordinary characters.

Mankind pay homage to those who soar above the mass, whether in a natural state of society or among civilized communities. In the former, unrestrained by those codes of law which protect the weak in intellect against the arts of the more cunning, and those deficient in physical strength against the assaults of the more powerful, great deference is paid to the superiority of mental or corporeal endowments.

It would be unnecessary to suggest to intelligent readers the proof of this disposition of the human heart, conversant as they must be with the histories of those countries and those eras, in which obscure individuals have started from viewless points, to be-

come the leaders of myriad armies and countless proselytes, the founders of empires and of creeds.

In our own times, in this most civilized age of the world, the same feeling of admiration has sometimes aided extraordinary talent, to attain unexampled success. We have beheld individuals working their way upward from the humblest class of society, to the first places in literature, and the first rank in arms. These instances do not take away from our wonder at each new example. For there is far more difficulty in our day, in rising above the common level, than at those eras, in which less information was distributed, and less restraint prevailed of actual knowledge upon the imaginings of genius.

The spirit of the age is tending to raise all to a happy equality. Every association ought to be formed upon this principle, every combination ought to exist with this idea. Education is working wonders, particularly in our own country, but we trust that its efforts will increase in a ratio, which it would be called folly to predict. And, the first care of all good governments ought to be, to provide institutions for the instruction of the young, and the favourite object of individual philanthropy, to facilitate their progress. But where all are provided out of the same armoury, the contest for victory becomes more arduous. In a crowd of equally matched

combatants, it is the more difficult to obtain success.

Among savages, personal bravery and eloquence are qualities in which there is power. These draw every thing else within the grasp of the possessor.

In civilized life, competition is extended throughout countless varieties of forms, and at a certain grade of talent and attainment, there is a point above which very few ascend. There are thousands of chemists, naturalists, poets, and lawyers, who are all well informed, intelligent, and respectable in their professions.

Through this crowd, the ambitious must pass to reach the distant goal, and he who seeks distinction must leave the crowd behind. The determination is the characteristic of genius, but the assistance of the mass is not easily won to the support of those, who, in striving to ascend, and by that very effort, discover their indisposition to linger among the million. The first feeling of the mass is to doubt the abilities, and certainly the success of their late companion; and if the rise of the individual is retarded by the pressure of poverty, the impediments to his progress are generally insurmountable.

The son of genius experiences the truth of these remarks, and it is at the very outset of his career, that the circumstances which make success so difficult in modern times, present themselves in array before him.—When his heart is most susceptible,

and his sensibilities are most lively, these seem to press hardest upon him.

But this very difficulty of success in civilized life, where learning and education are more equally diffused, felt as it is by the aspirant for fame in all its force, only makes success more glorious. If indifference or enmity, or ill-natured criticism has caused the death of such men as Montesquieu, they have also roused the energies of such as Byron.

Those persons who are curious in their speculations upon this subject, will do well to consult the entertaining and instructive works of D'Israeli, and the recent production of Dr Madden; who, however, has drawn largely, for the interest he has imparted to his own opinions, upon those of the former gentleman.

To come back to the purpose of this Sketch, from which we were naturally led by the recollection of the difficulties attending the career of eminent persons, we think there is a propriety in making his character known, when we see with what care "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties" has recently been illustrated. Every development of the resources of the human intellect is useful, and the weak hand and fainting spirit will be strengthened by the recital of the conduct of those who have vanquished poverty and ignorance, indifference, criticism, and enmity.

In this spirit we have undertaken the Life of

James Hogg, happier in being able to portray the lineaments of a living character, than in being obliged to recall the outlines of a lamented friend.

He has met with many sad reverses since he emancipated himself from the ignorance of infancy, but his indomitable courage, and his frank and manly bearing, have secured for him the respect of literary men in every country. His reputation as a poet and romance writer is established, and we trust that the second Burns may yet feel the security of his position, far, far removed from the influence of undeserved misfortunes, or the treachery of pretended friends. Our readers will be astonished to learn the lowness of the condition from which he has so honourably elevated himself. Few among the illustrious great ever rose from so humble a beginning. Even Franklin, with but a penny roll for his breakfast, had the greatest possible advantage in his career, over this poor lad wandering almost naked on the bleak hills of Ettrick. No wonder the poet has declared that he likes "to write about himself."—He must feel an honest pride in having passed safely over that season of youthful suffering and hapless ignorance, to become one of the boasts of Scotland. If Sir Walter Scott has elaborately traced the efforts of his own mind in its splendid development, the Ettrick Shepherd may well be excused for telling us, how he has triumphed over adversity. From several

accounts of his birth and parentage, we learn that he was the second son of Robert Hogg and Margaret Laidlaw, and was born on the 25th of January, 1772. His natal day was the anniversary of Burns' birth, and it was marked by an occurrence of a truly Scottish character. A messenger was despatched on horseback, for the midwife whose services were required on this occasion, but the night was gloomy and dark, the Ettrick "deep in flood," and the unfortunate man was drowned in the attempt to cross its stream. Nevertheless, by some strange and unlooked for aid, the female arrived in time to give her needed assistance at the perilous hour.

His father, and, indeed, his ancestors were all Shepherds, and he and his brothers served in the same capacity. The eldest, William, was formerly, if he is not now, shepherd to Sir James Montgomery of the county of Peebles in Scotland. David, the third son, was in the employment of Sir Walter Scott, and Robert, the youngest, having also engaged in the same pursuit, recently died on his passage to the United States, after having been only a few days out of port. He has left a widow and young family behind him, they arrived safely in America, and are now very happily situated at Silver Lake, in Pennsylvania, where they have found a liberal friend and generous landlord in Robert H. Rose. Their prospects are quite cheer-

ing, and the interest they have excited is not merely that of association with their relative the poet, but what has also arisen from their own exemplary conduct and amiable character.

The father of the poet, having saved a considerable sum of money, commenced the business of a dealer in sheep, and in order to carry it on more advantageously, took a lease of two Ettrick farms, known as Ettrick House and Ettrick Hall. His efforts, nevertheless, were unsuccessful. A sudden and general depreciation of the value of sheep, and the fraudulent conduct of his principal debtor, reduced him to beggary, and he was turned forth penniless upon the world.

It appears that, during a short prosperity which the father of the poet experienced in his business, the latter attended a neighbouring school, but as he was not six years of age when he was obliged to leave it, in consequence of the misfortunes of his parent, he had made but little progress, being able merely to read the Proverbs of Solomon and the Shorter Catechism. Indeed, at that tender age, even this, under all the circumstances, was more than could have been expected. It seems that a friendly neighbour, Mr Brydon of Crosslee, with a considerate regard for the distressed, engaged Mr Hogg, the senior, as his shepherd; and, indeed, until his death, proved himself a man of true hu-

manity, by many acts of kindness towards the family, to which the poet has often feelingly alluded.

Still, however, the children were forced to do something for themselves, and at the age of seven years, James went to service as a cowherd, and received for half a year's service, "a ewe lamb and a pair of shoes." He describes himself at this period as somewhat eccentric, running about almost naked, and constantly losing his clothes in his rambles among the hills.

During the winter of the next year, his parents managed to send him to a school, at which the children of a farmer in the neighbourhood were instructed, and here, in a Bible class, he learned to read correctly. His efforts to acquire a knowledge of writing were unavailing. "Every letter," says the poet, "with which I disfigured the sheets of paper, was nearly an inch in length." No more instruction did the young lad ever attain at school. For thus, as he expresses himself, "terminated my education!" We are particular in the relation of this part of the poet's life, as it forms a remarkable contrast with his subsequent celebrity.

In the succeeding spring he again returned to his occupation of tending the kine, which was the lowliest employment then known in Scotland. From this period until he became fifteen years of age, he served many different masters, but rose at length to the more honourable grade of shepherd's

boy. From some he received kind treatment and from others the reverse. At one time he was almost destitute of clothing, his parents being unable to procure him a sufficient quantity to make him even tolerably warm, out of the wretched pittance of his hard earned wages. His time, constantly absorbed by his employment, left him without much opportunity for reading, and the Bible was the only book to which he had free access.

At this period his natural taste for music led him to invest a portion of his scanty wages in the purchase of an old violin. In this taste he resembled Burns, who was himself a "fiddler as well as poet." Five shillings, with difficulty collected together, determined his choice of an instrument. He became a musician, and now it is well known among his friends, that music is one of the favourite amusements of the Shepherd. This very circumstance no doubt had a direct influence upon the future literary labours of the Bard; for, when Sir Walter Scott, years afterwards, went in search of "the ancient ballad," and to gather relics of the forest minstrelsy, he found the Shepherd familiar with more traditionary accounts, acquainted with more of the ancient songs, and possessed of more of the spirit of Scottish poetry than any person he had yet met in Scotland. This testimony is highly encomiastic of the character and the talent of the young poet.

Mr Hogg's next remove was to Elibank upon Tweed, where he remained a year and a half in his old occupation, and thence to Willenslee, where he was employed by Mr Laidlaw for two years in succession. It was in his eighteenth year that he first saw the "Life and Adventures of Sir William Wallace," and Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd."—It is very curious that Burns mentions the History of Wallace as the first book he ever read in private, and he says of it and another, the Life of Hannibal, which he read at the same time, that they gave him more pleasure than any two books he ever saw afterwards. The coincidence is exceedingly interesting. It was with the greatest difficulty he mastered these works.—His comprehension of the measure was very obscure, in consequence of the dialect in which the works were composed.

Mrs Laidlaw, the wife of his employer, gave him to study, for his edification, some books of a theological nature, and among others "Burnet's Theory of the Conflagration of the Earth." This work almost crazed him. He assures us the contemplation of the millenium, with its various consequences "nearly overturned" his brain.

He now, for the first time attempted to write a letter to his brother. But his specimen of chirography, must, according to his own account, have been indeed unique. Even Tony Lutpkin would

have come off conqueror in a contest with the Shepherd. Whether his brother ever succeeded in deciphering the scroll, he has not informed us.

In 1790, at the age of eighteen, he entered the service of Mr Laidlaw of Black House, with whom he remained until the year 1800. It was in 1796 that he first felt the inspiration of the Muse. A number of valuable books were placed before him by his friend for perusal, in which he became deeply interested. From the moment he comprehended their meaning, his own genius began to arouse itself to exertion.

Led by the prevailing taste of his associates, and the attachment which every where showed itself for the local traditions of the Scottish Muse, Mr Hogg first turned his attention to the composition of songs and ballads, happy to hear them chaunted by the neighbouring lassies, who rejoiced in the Muse of "Jamie the Poeter."

The difficulties which beset him in his attempts to write these songs, were of no trifling character. Although in most of the sketches of this remarkable man, the following has found a place, we imagine it is too singular, and too novel to be omitted by any biographer who seeks to illustrate the workings of his mind. "I had no more difficulty in composing songs then, than I have at present. But then the writing of them—that was a job! I had no method of learning to write, than by fol-

lowing the Italian alphabet, and although I always stripped myself of coat and vest when I began to pen a song, yet my wrist took a cramp, so that I could rarely make above four or six lines at a sitting.

“Whether my manner of writing it out, was new I know not, but it was not without singularity. Having very little time to spare from my flock, which was unruly enough, I folded and stitched a few sheets of paper together, which I carried in my pocket. I had no ink-horn, but in place of it, I *borrowed* a small vial, which I fixed in a hole in the breast of my waistcoat, and having a cork fastened by a piece of twine, it answered the purpose fully as well. Thus equipped, whenever a leisure minute or two offered, and I had nothing else to do, I sat down and wrote out my thoughts as I found them. This is still my invariable practice in writing prose. I cannot make out one sentence by study, without the pen in my hand to catch the ideas as they arise. My manner of composing poetry is very different, and I believe much more singular. Let the piece be of what length it will, I compose and correct wholly in my mind, or on a slate, ere ever I put pen to paper, and then I write it down as fast as the A, B, C.”

It was in the next year, 1797, that he first heard of *Burns*, whose death had taken place during the

preceding year. This ignorance of the author of *Tam O'Shanter* is not strange, when we consider the limited opportunities of the Shepherd, and the fact that Burns's poems had not become familiar to the lower classes of Scottish readers. It was not until his death that Scotland fully knew what she had lost, or showed the respect due to his great talents.

A very curious description of the Shepherd's feeling is given by himself, on his hearing for the first time some account of Burns, his birth and death, with those anecdotes of his condition and character, which were now becoming every day more and more the topics of conversation among the country folk. A half-witted fellow came one day to the hill side, and told him the story of Burns, at the same time repeating as a specimen of his poetry the universal favourite, *Tam O'Shanter*.

The story impressed itself deeply on the Shepherd's mind, and before his companion left him he could repeat every word of it himself! A strong memory seems to be the prerogative of the Bards of Scotland. Sir Walter Scott has been known to repeat a poem of several hundred lines, merely upon hearing it recited once.

It appears that the ambition as well as the memory of the Shepherd was affected by the information. On comparing the friendless youth of Burns with his own, he found a close resemblance

between them, and when it occurred to him that his own birth-day was also that of Burns, that ballads and songs had inspired them both, he resolved to "be a poet and follow in his steps."

There was one deficiency in himself which quite overpowered the sensitive young Bard. He could not *write*, and he wept to think, however fancy and inspiration might impart their influence, he could not "catch their shadows as they passed."

About this period he was attacked violently with a complaint to which he had always been subject, and during his agony which was almost insupportable, he saw his attendant, an old woman, fall into a swoon on seeing as she imagined his *ghost*. But in spite of her second sight, and a consultation which he overheard as to the best method of laying him out, he recovered, thanks to a kind Providence and a good physician.

It appears that all this time he was constantly practising in song writing, though his first published song made its appearance in 1801. At this period Britain was threatened with invasion by Napoleon, and not only was the *materiel* of the nation called on to defend its shores, but writers of all descriptions, from the poets, inspired by the divinity that stirs within them, down to the hack writer who toils at a penny a line, were active in the cause of their country.

The Shepherd did not fail to catch the glow of

feeling which pervaded every rank, and he published anonymously a song, entitled, "Donald MacDonald." It sprang at once into celebrity. It became a universal favourite, and was received at once into all societies. Mr Hogg states that he first sang it at a social meeting at the Crown Tavern in Edinburgh, and that he left it, at the suggestion of some one, whose name he has forgotten, to be properly arranged and engraved. In his retreat from the gay world, he afterwards heard that it was a song in every one's mouth, though no one troubled himself to inquire into the condition, or learn the name of the author. Two anecdotes are connected with it, which we cannot refrain from repeating. Earl Moira, commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland, happened to be present at a dinner in Edinburgh where this song was sung. After three successive encores which were complied with, his lordship arose, expatiated on its excellence, praised the singer who was a very respectable person, and offered him his whole influence, for any thing he could aid him in obtaining from the government.

And yet such is life,—the name of the author was never asked. While his verse was drawing forth eulogiums of rank and valour, he was never thought of, but was left in his peasant garb to wander among the Scottish hills in penury and ignorance. This is too often the lot of the children

of genius. He who has studied their history, and reflected upon their labours, will have found many instances similar to this. They may have "made the verses," but another "takes the honour."

Several amusing anecdotes in relation to this particular ballad have been recorded by the author, and are to be found in a volume of his songs recently published.

Mr Hogg's first prose essay was styled "Reflections on a view of the Nocturnal Heavens," which was the labour of a week. Of the character of this work we are not informed.

In 1801, incited by his love of rhyming, and inspired by the example of Burns he resolved, while on a visit to Edinburgh, whither he went to dispose of his sheep, to publish a collection of his poems. Having, however, to trust to his memory for the principal part of them, he made sad work in the selection, taking rather those with which he was most familiar, than those which were really the best. An edition of 1000 copies was published, and so far, his "vanity," as Mr Hogg says, was gratified. But the numerous imperfections more than out-balanced, by their annoying palpableness, the pleasure he otherwise received from being in print.

Without friends, without patronage, the Shepherd trusted his poetry to an indifferent public, who most generally overlook the claims to indulgence which belong to unassisted merit, in the

selfish pleasure of exercising the right of condemnation. One of the poems, "Will an' Keatie," had the usual run through the periodicals of the day, but the rest were nearly forgotten, except, perhaps, by the London critic, who afterwards dragged forth the defective work to annoy the feelings, if not to injure the prospects of the Bard.

In 1802, a part of Sir Walter Scott's work called the *Border Minstrelsy* had made its appearance, and as is well known excited much attention. To the third volume of this, Mr. Hogg contributed, and due acknowledgements are made him for his assistance. It was now perceived that a body of sentiment, wit, humour, and poetry, lay *perdu* among the hills and vales, the lakes and glens of Scotland. The ambition of the Ettrick Shepherd was awakened, and though still unfortunate in his projects, and a voluntary exile for some months from Ettrick, in consequence of his disasters there, he set about collecting, re-composing, and re-constructing all the traditions and legends he could gather, and the *Mountain Bard* made its appearance, dedicated to the author of the *Border Minstrelsy*. It is the opinion of many able critics that there are in this volume, some compositions of great merit. Mr Allan Cunningham in a recent essay on British literature, gives it as his opinion, that Gilman's Cleuch is full of tenderness and simplicity, and that Willie Wilkin, another tale in

the same collection, ranks with the *Glenfinlas* of Sir Walter Scott.

"The description of the Spectre Horses," is unsurpassed in any ballad. He was at the time, in the service of a gentleman of Nithsdale. It seems that Sir Walter approved of the publication of this volume, and the Shepherd hastened to Edinburgh to avail himself of his new popularity and to forward the publication.

Constable at that time had no great admiration for poetry. If his first opinions had prevailed over that consciousness of merit, which all literary men possess in some degree, and which prompted Mr Hogg to persist in printing his book, we should probably have heard no more of him. The publisher would not touch it, unless first secured by a subscription list of two hundred names. A list of five hundred was soon procured by the author, and the speculation contrary to Mr Constable's calculation, turned out well. From this effort of his muse, he derived a very handsome sum, and he received the same year nearly a hundred pounds, for his work on the Cultivation of Sheep.

From abject penury, he was at once elevated to comparative independence by the possession of three hundred pounds. But although his publisher faithfully accounted to him for his share of the receipts, many of the *patronising* subscribers took their copies and never paid for them. This is a

common practice, we fear, even to this day. Intimate friends and soi-disant patrons expect to receive copies of a new work as a compliment for their good wishes, and an author can at any time easily part with a whole edition, and be never the better for it either in fame or money. The Shepherd experienced only the usual lot of scribbling humanity.

Other consequences took place. The possessor of the three hundred pounds almost went mad. He fell into the same mistake that Burns did in the heyday of his early prosperity, taking a farm beyond his ability to cultivate, and struggling for three years out of one difficulty into another, until he had exhausted means and credit, and even hope itself.

At this turn of his affairs, the Ettrick Shepherd shewed the integrity of his character and the strength of his fortitude. It is in difficulties, whether of a pecuniary or any other nature, that genius lifts itself above the ordinary evils of life, soothed by the consciousness of power and honesty of purpose. Mr Hogg freely gave up all he had to his creditors, and found the consequences of his misfortunes less disagreeable in their direct bearing upon himself, than in the effect they produced upon the conduct of his former friends. Returning to Ettrick Forest, he found them unexpectedly changed. Those he once loved and trusted, treated

him in return with coolness, if not contempt. His own familiars, those almost of his own household, forsook him, and the crime of having displayed a poetic talent was visited at the hands of his associates with the same rigour that other lovers of the Muse have been often fated to endure.

Under many reverses the Ettrick Shepherd found his character nearly gone. No one would employ him, not even those with whom he had already served, and who knew his capability and efficiency.

It was then as he informs us, "in utter desperation" at his prospects among his native hills, he resolved to adventure his stock of poetry at Edinburgh. In February 1810, it was that "he wrapped his plaid around him," and went to town. Here new disappointments met him. He found his poetic talents as little valued as his capacity for managing sheep. The publishers turned a deaf ear to his proposals. They were willing to publish on his own account, but not a penny would they give him or guarantee him for his productions. Pressed by poverty, and yet sustained by the recollection of his former partial success, he once more ventured to apply to Mr Constable, to print a volume for him. The publisher seemed to hesitate between the desire of obliging and the risk of loss. It was only after several interviews that he agreed to print an edition of 1000 copies, at 5s. each,

and to share the profits with the author. This speculation turned out badly, as it would appear, for Mr Hogg never received a farthing for his share.

The work was called the *Forest Minstrel*, and is described by its author as consisting of his early songs, most of them very indifferent, and displaying little knowledge of life or manners. Indeed, up to this period he had not even known what polished society was, being as he describes himself, "only a sort of natural songster, without any other advantage upon earth."

Disappointed in the anticipations which he had formed, he attempted to establish a weekly paper, for which, as he admits, he was anything but qualified. Not meeting with encouragement he grew impatient, and began to imagine booksellers "the enemies of genius," and printers, the tools of the booksellers.

After running about from one to the other, he could not help giving them his malediction, for being as he supposed, all combined together against him. He received ridicule from one, a subscription from another, and advice, that *liberal bestowment* of friendship, from a third.

At last a person by the name of Robertson, a bookseller in Nicholson-street, embarked in the venture, and a quarto demi sheet, price 4*d.* made its appearance in that year. The history of this paper

is amusing. In the first place, the carrier demanded pay for all the presentation copies, and this gave much offence. Many persons expected to obtain their papers for nothing, many more never intended to pay for those they ordered, and besides experiencing all this, the Editor raw, or to say the least, quite devoid of tact, made use of some indecorous expressions in his third number, which caused the immediate withdrawal of seventy-three subscribers!

Nothing daunted at his misfortune, he set this down to the absurd fastidiousness of cockneyism, and made no change in his method of expressing himself.

Another error which he himself soon perceived, was his indulgence in the company of Robertson and his companions at a tippling house, near the Cowgate, where every day they drank sufficient to confuse their heads,—and to convince Mr Hogg that he was going “straight to the deevil.”

Acting upon a proper impulse, he broke off the connexion with his publisher, made a new arrangement with the Aikmans, and fagged at his hebdomadal for the residue of the year. Several persons of great respectability contributed to the columns of the “Spy.” The matter furnished by the Editor himself amounted to eight hundred and thirty quarto columns, certainly a proof of great industry, if nothing else. It had reached the point of re-

muneration, according to Mr Allan Cunningham, when it was obliged to yield to the opposition of those who had previously deserted its cause. The paper went out of print, and the author imagines that five copies could not now be found in Scotland.

For the honour of human nature, and as a contrast to that indifference or opposition in which the public indulge, to the discomfiture and sorrow of many a sensitive man of talent, the conduct of a friend of Mr Hogg, at a time when the failure of his periodical, the debts it created at his publisher's, and the unabated enmity of a portion of his acquaintances, made him feel the aggravation of want and poverty, deserves honourable notice. His name is GRIEVE. Neither misfortune nor imprudence could shake his attachment to the Shepherd Editor. Not doling out his reluctant aid to importunity, as is the fashion with too many who wish to be patrons, he anticipated the wants and foresaw the necessities of his distressed companion, and when all else seemed cold or forgetful, watched with the interest of true affection over the waning fortunes of his unhappy friend.

The Shepherd retains a warm remembrance of these acts of disinterestedness, and has related them in his auto-biographical sketches with characteristic fervour.

The next project in which the Bard engaged,

was that of a Debating Society, in which he was chosen Secretary, with a salary of twenty pounds per annum, which was never paid ! This society for three successive years held public meetings, at which crowds constantly assembled, paying for their admittance and taking a deep interest in the discussions. In these the Shepherd, though now somewhat older than the majority of the members, bore a conspicuous part. He was told that he could not speak, and therefore should not make the attempt. His self-confidence brought him off with "flying colours." The talent remains with him, if we may judge from the reports of addresses which he has since made on several public occasions. It was there that he learned in the sharp contest of wit and argument, and from the usual expressions of approval, or disapproval, of the audience, something of the public taste, if not of its caprice. To his mingling in these scenes, the Shepherd attributed much of his subsequent improvement. He was at the same time a regular visiter at the Theatre, where he was placed upon the free list by the manager, Mr Siddons.

He was not an inattentive spectator of the literary world amidst the distraction of his own varying pursuits. The poetry of SCOTT and BYRON began to be popular, and the Shepherd's ambition seemed to be aroused. Mr Grieve, the friend already mentioned, used his influence in persuading

him once more to try his poetic powers. The beautiful poem of the *QUEEN'S WAKE* was accordingly planned, and in a few months executed. Even this was almost stifled at its birth. It fortunately did not lie forgotten for years like the first of the *Waverly Novels*, because its early critic was unfavourable. Its story is this. It was to have been read to one of the author's female friends, who, with her husband, was invited to his lodgings for that purpose. The opinion was to have been given at that domestic tribunal, the tea-table, where the ladies ever find their auditors attentive, and their remarks, of authority. Before the anxious reader had proceeded half a page in his poem, he was arrested in his progress by a doubt expressed as to the proper use of a word. Some one defended the author, but others condemned him. Indeed the argument so entirely engaged the attention of all present, that the poem and the reader were quite overlooked. The poet could not, with all his efforts, proceed a line farther, and finding himself quite out of place amidst the general debate, he rolled up his manuscript and openly declaring his vexation, took up his hat and departed. Recalled by this to a sense of their impoliteness, the critics appointed another day for a meeting, and the Bard accordingly wended his way to Buccleugh Place, where the reading of the poem was to be concluded. Here a laughable scene oc-

curring ending in new disappointment. The husband of the lady undertook the office of reader, but ere he had finished the third page, he was called out of the room, by the information that an itinerant Improvisatore was rhyming in the hall. Tired of waiting for his return, the poet had the alternative either to fold up his manuscript, or go on with the reading to some one else who happened to be in the room but probably took as little interest in it as any of the others. He preferred the former, and presently joined the audience which was now collected about the wandering minstrel, listening to, and apparently delighted with the wretched doggerel of a gaberlunzie !

Mr Hogg was very angry, as may be well imagined, and he walked off in high displeasure at this treatment. Reader, if thou hast a touch of the poetic fire, or even if thou hast recently found out, that thy lucubrations have been all thy lifetime embodied in prose, and on some occasion hast been tempted by thine ardour, or thy self-confidence, to open thy heart to thy friend, and thy manuscript to his or her examination, thou hast most probably felt, what, under such circumstances, it was, "to be, to do, or to suffer." Warmed by thy subject, thou hast eloquently read, as an author only can read his own productions, the thoughts that breathed, the words that burned. In the midst of some delightful passage, where thy ardent

spirit soared to the third heaven of its happiness, thou hast heard thy listening friend, in the very critical moment of a half-finished sentence, exclaim with a yawn, "excuse me, sir." "John, put on some more coals, and see what can possibly be the matter with the lamp."

At such a moment, how did thy voice break off into silence, thy hand pass hurriedly through thy hair, and thine eye glance around to learn the reason of this most unexpected interruption. The charm broken, thou canst read no longer. An apology for having claimed any attention from other more agreeable occupations, is made by thee, and thou risest from the table, resolved to hang no more pearly chains around the necks of such queer animals.

The Shepherd actually could not get a hearing beyond the third page. Moliere's old housekeeper, must have been another Dacier, in comparison with those, who could tire at the reading of the "Queen's Wake."

Mr Hogg informs us, that he read no more poems at Buccleugh Place, and certainly no one could disapprove of his determination. The friend, Mr Grieve, whose name has already been mentioned, kept up his confidence by assuring him that his effort was a good one, and under this sanction he went to see Mr Constable with his "plan of pub-

lication." He was received coldly, and told to "call again, to-morrow."

On calling again, he found the publisher unwilling to do anything without seeing the manuscript, and having a subscription list of 200 responsible names. This being agreed to, the publisher offered £100 for the right to print an edition of 1000 copies. The conditions were hard, and the proposition was disagreeable. Still, however, as Mr Constable declared he would give no more, the Shepherd obtained a private subscription through the aid of some personal friends, sufficient to meet the views of the publisher.

At this time a young person of the name of Goldie, who also belonged to the Debating Club, prevailed upon the poet, somewhat against his wishes, to show him the manuscript. Upon perusing it he made him an offer similar to that of Mr Constable, with the addition of an allowance of the 200 subscribers for his sole benefit ! This offer induced the author to attempt better terms with Mr Constable, who, according to his own notion, "knew how as well to sell a book as buy one." But he was inexorable, and having at the time a negotiation on foot with Scott, which had created some temporary excitement, he dismissed the Shepherd with a curse on the ingratitude of literary men !

The work came from the press of Goldie, in the early part of 1813. The circumstances attending

its publication are worthy of notice. They form another page in the book of life, another incident in the story of authorship and poetry. Almost in despair, he had cast his bread upon the waters, but, according to promise, he found it again before many days. The poet went up to town to learn the fate of his production. He sauntered about the streets, and eyed the shop windows of the booksellers as he passed, to see, if possible, whether it was yet on sale. He beheld the *title*, to his great satisfaction, displayed in most of them, but he had not the courage to go in and ask a single question. He compared himself to a "man between life and death, waiting the sentence of the jury." We can scarcely conceive any thing more naive or affecting than this confession. While hundreds were at the very moment, perusing the poem with pleasure and astonishment, the poor author was wandering through the town, afraid even to inquire about its reception.

At last, as he was lounging about the High-street, he met a friend by the name of Dunlop, whose characteristic salutation the Bard has recorded. "Ye useless poetical deevil that ye're, What hae ye been doing a' this time? Why hae ye been pestering us, ye stupid head, wi' four-penny papers, an' daft shilly-shally sangs, an' blatherin' an' speakin' in the forum, an' had stuff in ye to produce sic a thing as this?"

"Ay, Willie," replied the Shepherd, "ye hae seen my new beuk?"

"Ay, faith," said his friend, "that I have, and it has lickit me out o' a night's sleep, Ye hae hit the right nail on the head now. Yon's the very thing, sir."

"I'm glad to hear ye say sae, Willie," answered the poet, "but what do *ye* ken about poems?"

"Never ye mind," said Dunlop, "*how* I ken. I gie ye my word, yon's the thing that will do. If ye had na made a fool o' yoursel afore, man, yon wad hae sold better than ever a beuk sold! Wha would hae thought it, that there was as muckle in that sheep's head o' yours, ye stupid poetical deevil as ye are."

This gave the Shepherd so much delight, and withal so much confidence, that he began to walk more erectly, and, as he met his acquaintances one after the other, he heard little else from them, than liberal commendations.

The popularity of this poem seemed established at once. The Eclectic Review, however, attacked it, and the Edinburgh was silent until the appearance of the second or third edition. It gave a favourable notice, only when its opinions were no longer of importance to the author. He mentions, in his life, that nothing of his composition has since been honoured with Mr Jeffrey's notice.

The reputation of the Queen's Wake is now

fully established. The design is good, and the execution, though unequal in its parts, is marked by all the characteristics of true genius.

The story of *Kilmeny* is universally admitted to be chaste and original, and its diction is exquisitely sweet and harmonious. The *Queen's Wake* has been no less popular in America than in Great Britain. Perhaps there is not a modern poem in our language, which has had a greater circulation in the United States than this.

From his dream of happiness, Mr Hogg awoke to the reality of disappointment. His publisher became involved in the distress of many other small booksellers, and after preventing, by personal interference, the publication of a third edition by Mr Constable, undertook it himself and stopped payment a week afterwards. Thus the money previously gained by the work was lost, and all the hopes which he had cherished, of being able to repair his former mistakes, and pay off his old debts, were blighted at a breath.

It was on this occasion that he first became acquainted with Mr Blackwood, the publisher. He was one of Goldie's assignees, and his management, as well as that of his associates, eventuated in the preservation of the residue of the edition remaining on the publisher's shelves. A considerable sum, in consequence, realized by the sale of it.

About this period, his acquaintances were con-

siderably numerous among the literary characters of the town, and while with some he was on terms of great intimacy, with most he practised a reserve, which prevented them from considering his intercourse presuming or troublesome.

Such was the popularity of the *Queen's Wake*, that a fourth edition was published by Messrs Murray and Blackwood, but it produced no solid returns. A fifth, a beautiful specimen of typography, succeeded better.

Of this poem, which, as we have already stated, has been scarcely less admired in America than in Great Britain, the author appears not to have had a high opinion. He considered it as a device merely to string together a series of ballads, which were not equal in merit, nor interesting in their design. The public have judged otherwise, and the editions are entirely exhausted. Moore is supposed to have taken his idea of *Lalla Rookh*, which appeared in 1817, from the *Queen's Wake*. There is certainly a strong resemblance in the plan. During one of Mr Hogg's tours in the Highlands, which, about this period of his life, he was accustomed every summer to make, he became an inmate of Kinnaird House, in Athol. The fair mistress of the mansion, Mrs Chalmers Izett, introduced him into a small study, where books and writing materials were placed before him, with a request that he would consider himself at home and

amuse himself as he thought proper. On accepting the offer, he asked the lady for a subject, and she gave him the "majestic river rolling beneath his eyes."

Inspired as it would seem by the occasion and the request, he stole time enough from his fishing excursions to write *Madoc of the Moor*. This, although a favourite with the author, for the descriptions of nature which it contains, has never acquired the popularity which attended the "*Queen's Wake*." We imagine it is quite worthy of the preference he entertained for it. The measure, that of Spenser, it must be considered, is difficult, and when the subject itself is of a grave character, it falls heavily on the ear, and conveys its ideas slowly to the mind. The Shepherd, after an animated discussion with his lady patroness, took the *TAY* for his subject, and commenced the Poem.

Not only are the descriptions generally well written, but there are occasional passages truly exquisite.

In the same year, he conceived the notion of writing a poetical volume of a romantic character, to be entitled *Midsummer Night Dreams*. A friend, appealed to for his opinion in the matter, advised against the scheme, and it fell through. "*Connel of Dee*," one of the series, has since

made its appearance as a part of the "Winter Evening Tales."

Another literary effort of the author's during the same year, was the *Pilgrims of the Sun*, published in consequence of the good opinion entertained of it, by the same person who advised against the "*Midsummer Night Dreams*."

Mr Hogg frankly declares, that in those who praised his works he placed implicit confidence; and for those who did otherwise, he entertained very little regard! A prompting of nature, which every author feels to be a part of his own indwelling fancies.

In bringing out this poem, there occurred the usual difficulties of negotiation with the publishers. By the advice of Mr Constable, who avoided the risk and trouble of the publication, the manuscript was put into the hands of Mr Miller, and a regular contract was made with him for its appearance from the press within two months, and in conformity with the stipulations made by the parties respectively.

Mr Miller, however, thought proper to change his mind; and on Mr Hogg's requiring him to proceed with the work, or return the manuscript, he very promptly availed himself of the latter alternative, and thus rid himself at once of his responsibility.

The manuscript was afterwards placed in the

hands of Mr Murray, the London bookseller, who suddenly became as doubtful of its success as Mr Miller had been. He would not allow his name to appear upon the title-page. The Author contented himself with the retaliatory assertion, that Murray and his advisers *could not write as well*, and with this remark, he informs us, he pleased himself, and overlooked the affront.

When the Poem came out, it was well received by the public; yet, though it was praised in the Reviews, and a very large edition of it was sold in America, it loaded the booksellers' shelves in Great Britain, and may possibly do so yet.

It was evidently very little of a favourite with the Trade, and, from the circumstance of Mr Murray's not allowing his name to be connected with it, was liable to be received by them with great distrust and suspicion. This is one of the secrets of publication, which by this time Mr Hogg must have fully discovered.

The Pilgrims of the Sun is a wonderful effort of the imagination. It is in Poetry, what one of Martin's productions is in Painting. It has illimitable perspective, vast outlines, and a sublime effect. There is even something Miltonic in the grandeur of the description of other worlds, and certainly there can be nothing more sweet and touching than the return of the Pilgrim to her home and her mother.

His next literary adventure was of a different character. He proposed editing a volume of Poetry, to consist of original compositions from the pens of the most distinguished authors of the country, and he applied to them individually for their assistance in his scheme. From Southey and Wordsworth he obtained poems of superior excellence;—from Byron and Rodgers, although he had their promises, he received nothing. In his account of this project, he mentions his ignorance of the cause of Lord Byron's conduct.

In the life of the noble bard, his biographer, Moore, avows *he* dissuaded him from the performance of his engagement, *out of regard to his interests*. The poem intended for Mr Hogg was the celebrated *Lara*; and its author thought well of the plan of which it was to be a part, and which he compared to a similar one of Dodsley's which had proved successful.

It appears from the published letters of Lord Byron, that he esteemed the Shepherd highly, and recommended him to Mr Murray. A correspondence of some length took place between them, of which Mr Hogg has spoken with great animation.

Mr Hogg mentions that one letter, and the last, was written to him by Lord Byron, after the birth of his daughter Ada; and in that, his affection for his wife and daughter was very evident. The

Shepherd complains that these valued testimonials have been taken from him by visitors, without his knowledge or approbation.

The refusal of Scott to contribute anything to the proposed volume overthrew the whole design. It was in vain the Shepherd reminded him of his services, in adding to the treasures of the Border Minstrelsy. The appeal was fruitless, and the result an estrangement of the two Bards. In the forthcoming *Life of Sir Walter* by Mr Lockhart, the mystery of the refusal may be unravelled.

The Shepherd resented his conduct warmly, and candidly admits that he addressed him a letter couched in very intemperate language, and for a long time refused to speak to him. Under the influence of these feelings, he resolved to outdo even his contributors, by an imitation of their various styles, to be collected in a work to be called the *Poetic Mirror*. So complete was the deception, that one of the poems, which was read aloud by Mr Ballantyne at a dinner party, was unanimously pronounced to be an original production of Lord Byron.

The work was composed in three weeks, and published in three months afterwards. The first edition sold in six weeks, and another has since been exhausted. It was produced anonymously, and but for a bungling imitation of Wordsworth,

might, as the Poet imagines, have passed for a genuine work.

During the next year, he attempted some dramatic compositions, as almost all literary men, at one time or other, have done. There is a fascination in the Drama, which has spell-bound even the learned professions. Theologians and lawyers, as well as poets, have attempted, and some with great success, to hold its "mirror up to nature."

None of Mr Hogg's plays have been performed, and the want of interest they possessed induced him to give up this species of composition. A curious change in his literary views took place about this time. Mortified most probably at the want of success with which his poetic efforts had been rewarded, he resolved to give up poetry for prose; and, "save an idle story or two," and the finishing of a poem in hand, QUEEN HYNDE, he adhered to his determination.

Queen Hynde received the approbation of Sir Walter Scott and many other judicious critics; but though a large edition was sold, it *did not* take with the public, much to the Author's surprise. The subject was local, and the time of its action was laid as far back as the incursions of the Danes. At a dinner, given to him by some of his admirers in Scotland, a warm dispute arose as to the merits of this poem and the Queen's Wake;

and the Poet, in the zeal of his preference for the former, offered to back his opinions with a bet of the whole edition !

It was at this time, the project for the establishment of the Magazine, since known as Blackwood's, was first talked of by Mr Hogg. He has given a very amusing account of the intrigues attending it, the jealousies of the rival editors, and the fears of contending publishers. "The Chaldee Manuscript" arose out of the circumstance; the composition of which, though formerly in doubt, is now admitted to be his. It caused a great sensation in Edinburgh at the time. The subsequent connexion of Mr Hogg with the Magazine, did everything to establish its fame and increase its value.

The next work of his production, was the *Brownie of Bodsbeck*, brought out after *Old Mortality*, though written previously. In consequence of the delay of publication, which was owing to Mr Blackwood, it was pronounced an imitation of Sir Walter Scott's work; whereas, in fact, it was a composition of an earlier date. In this the Shepherd was again unfortunate.

Mr Hogg, in his reference to these imputations of want of originality, asserts that he has found publishers not trust-worthy in these matters; because they do not read the manuscript themselves, but adopt the opinions of some one in their em-

ployment, who is paid for his services as a critic. But Mr Hogg attributed his multiform casualties not only to the want of judgment in the publishers themselves, but to the influence of the aristocracy upon those publishers. "For my own part, I know that I have always been looked on by the learned part of the community as an intruder in the paths of literature, and every opprobrium has been thrown on me from that quarter. The walks of learning are occupied by a powerful aristocracy, who deem that province their peculiar right, else what would avail them all their dear-bought collegiate honours and degrees? No wonder they should view an intruder from the humble and despised ranks of the community with a jealous and indignant eye, and impede his progress by every means in their power." This idea may, in some measure, have arisen from the difficulties which beset his early path. Mr Hogg has latterly, however, been much caressed in the circles of which he was once so suspicious. The caprice of the fashionable world is greater however than its respect for talent. The treatment of Burns might have been in his mind's eye at the moment he wrote the sentences we have quoted.

It is well known, that during the height of his popularity, the Duchess of Gordon took his arm at a fashionable assembly, and distinguished him by a marked attention. It was not long, however, *or*

ere his shoes were old, before he found the poet forgotten in the ploughman, and his fashionable friends turning away their eyes from him, as he passed, lest he might claim the recognition they were once anxious to offer.

The Shepherd, if he has not discovered the keen sensibilities of the unhappy Burns, has been blessed with a temperament more resolute and unyielding. Reposing upon the conscientiousness of integrity, and having a bold and manly spirit, he seems to have sustained himself under vicissitudes which broke the heart of Burns.

The neglect of the aristocracy, however marked, never affected the Shepherd's tranquillity to any great degree ; and the very independence of his manner had the effect to retain the friendship of that portion of it which was worth possessing.

Mr Hogg's love of conviviality was not without its bad consequences. In the instance we are to relate, however, it led to a reconciliation with Sir Walter Scott. He relates of himself, that in consequence of the dissipation prevalent among the members of a curious club, called the "*Right and Wrong*," he became very ill, and was for three weeks under the hands of Dr Saunders. Sir Walter, notwithstanding the warm language and avowed hostility of the Shepherd, and the interruption of all intercourse for a twelvemonth previous, made daily inquiries after his health. He

also requested that he might have the best medical advice in Edinburgh, without regard to the expense, which he would himself willingly incur. And this, too, was accompanied by the condition, that the invalid should not, on any account, be informed of the circumstances. This kind and considerate conduct was accidentally discovered some months afterwards, by the convalescent, and it went straight to the heart of the grateful man. He immediately addressed an apologetical letter to his estranged friend, in which the whole soul of the writer was poured forth in apologies and regrets. The next day it was replied to in the shape of an invitation to breakfast, which was willingly accepted. In a walk which they took together the same day, the Shepherd endeavoured to introduce the subject of their differences, but Sir Walter adroitly parried every attempt to give the subject a reconsideration. He wished by-gones to be by-gones, and it is an inference of Mr Hogg's,—now all is forgiven and forgotten,—that no unfriendly feeling actuated the refusal to contribute to the Poetic Mirror.

Mr Hogg informs us, that his next literary undertaking, was the *Jacobite Relics of Scotland*. The cause of the Stuarts, it is well known, went hand in hand with wild romance. The attachment of the Scottish people to that family, survived two bloody conflicts, and the passionate loyalty which the clans displayed for a great number of years,

was only put down by the severity of sanguinary laws. It is very certain, if we may believe the secret histories of the times, that the Hanoverians, on coming to the throne of England, displayed as much selfishness, and as great a disregard to morality, as the weak-minded Stuarts themselves. The "Jacobite Muse" was not slow in perceiving their errors, and the satire and point of the Scottish songs were keenly felt by the individuals at whom they were aimed.

The popularity of these productions has continued to the present time ; and, indeed, if the language of the heart is anywhere to be discovered,—if pathos and passion,—if truth and natural feeling are embodied in any poetry, they are so in these relics of the Scottish Minstrelsy.

There is a nationality about the Scotch, which has always had an influence in their preservation, and, perhaps, among the collectors of these memoirs, none has exceeded our author in zeal. We believe we hazard nothing in saying, that few have entered into the subject with more feeling, or obtained more signal success. He took great pains to gather every fragment, and to collect every fact relating to the subject, and often, in his researches, encountered the opposition, and brought upon himself the suspicions, of the Highlanders themselves.

He has recorded several anecdotes, illustrative of this peculiarity. When he told them he was

gathering up old songs, they would reply to him, " Ohon, mon, you surely haif had very less to do at home, and so you want to get some of the songs of the poor repellioners from me, and then you will gie me up to King Shorge, to be hanged ! Hoo, no, that will never do, mon !"

Of the work itself, we can only say, that it has taken high rank among the other collections of the day, and no one pretends to investigate the merits of the Jacobite Minstrels, without examining the specimens obtained by Mr Hogg. It was about the same time that the *Winter Evening Tales* made their appearance. The publishers were Oliver & Boyd. It is believed that this collection was chiefly the composition of his early years, which will, in the author's opinion, account for their "blunt rusticity." Some objections have been taken to them on account of an occasional indelicacy which has been permitted to creep into the text.

The author asserts that he attempted to describe things as they were, without intending anything ill, and he prays to be forgiven by " God and man," for every word he may have written "injurious to religion and virtue." With such a disclaimer, even the most fastidious must be satisfied. The tales themselves are productions of merit. The *Shepherd's Calendar* is a beautiful picture of the incidents of a shepherd's employment. The story of the *Long Pack* is universally popular, and

had a circulation in the United States quite unprecedented.

In the same year of the publication of this work, the Shepherd, tired of his bachelor's life, married the youngest daughter of Mr Phillips, of Longbridge Moor, Annandale. She is still living, and has provided the Poet's best solace in his hours of despondency. His cottage on the "Altrive Lake" now truly became his home, and here he has since constantly resided.

His farm, which is known by that name, was given him in 1814, by the Duke of Buccleugh, at a time when he was without a place that he could call his own, and while, like Burns, he was alternately experiencing in the metropolis, the gales of success and disappointment.

The Shepherd found himself unnoticed by the mass of the aristocracy, but the Duchess of Buccleugh, had observed with attention the progress of his labours. This lady, who was of the Townshend family, on which was conferred, in 1783, the title of Sydney, had made it a particular request, that some fitting residence in the family estates in Dumfries-shire, should be conferred on Mr Hogg, as a tribute to his talents and worth. On her death in 1814, her wishes appear to have excited the generous impulses of her husband's heart, and in a long letter to the Shepherd, he informed him of the regard entertained for him by

the late Duchess, and his ready compliance with her wishes. The farm already mentioned was in this manner bestowed, the rent being made merely nominal, and here the poet was enabled, as he often congratulated himself upon his ability to do so, to shelter the grey head of his father, "among his native moors and streams, where each face was that of a friend, and every house was a home." Of these two benefactors the poet ever speaks with gratitude, and in the society of the Duke of Buccleugh he often found happiness and gathered hope. It appears that the death of his benefactress was soon followed by that of his benefactor, whom the sufferings of "a disconsolate heart" brought to an early grave.

It appears that the later success of his literary efforts, induced the Shepherd to run some new risks in his agricultural pursuits. Ascertaining, after his marriage, that he had about 1000*l.* due from his different publishers, he resolved to try farming on a large scale, and accordingly took a farm adjoining his own. The place had already ruined the two previous tenants, but confidence in his ability to resort to his pen in case of necessity, induced him to make the experiment.

The arrangement required a considerable outlay, as a farm, according to the calculations of Scottish husbandry, was to be stocked with one thousand sheep, twenty cows, and five horses; be-

sides which a large expenditure was to be made for fencing, draining, manuring, labourers' utensils, and suitable buildings.

Indeed, the expense would have been considered an insuperable objection to most American farmers, under similar circumstances. The Shepherd, bold and fearless, ventured upon the trial. But, notwithstanding the return from the farm and the gain of about a thousand pounds by his writings, in the next two years, he fell into difficulties, which, in the end, left him in a worse situation than when he began; and, at the age of sixty, when his lease of the second farm terminated, he was without six-pence in the world. His losses amounted to upwards of two thousand pounds, but he bore them with philosophy. The deficiency arising from his farm speculations, and which he began to feel in 1822, induced him once more to try his fortune as a writer. In a few months, he finished a work familiar to many of my readers, called "The Three Perils of Man: War, Women, and Witchcraft." Messrs Longman & Co. printed it for him, and he realized about one hundred and fifty pounds for the edition of one thousand copies.

Of this production the Author speaks more harshly than even the critics,—“Impatient to get hold of some of Messrs Longman & Co.’s money or bills, I *dashed on*, and *mixed up*, with what

might have made one of the best historical tales our country ever produced, such a mass of dabblerie as retarded the main story and made the whole perfectly ludicrous."

The next year he published "The Three Perils of Women," which produced him the same sum of money. This, in his opinion, possessed "absurdity as well as pathos."

"I was then," says Mr Hogg, "writing as if in desperation, but I now see matters in a different light." This is a common feeling when we bring a cool dispassionate judgment to bear upon our previous efforts made under any excitement; but we imagine the condemnation of the work in question leans to the extreme of severity.

In 1824, he published anonymously, a book full of "horrors," called "Confessions of a Sinner." It sold tolerably well, but never produced any thing to the Author. A previous work, in one volume, with which we have no acquaintance, from the same publishers, had no better fate. They were, however, offered a third, called "Lives of Eminent Men," which they refused, because the former works had been censured. With all due regard to our esteemed Bard, we should suppose this last was an undertaking, to which, considering the turmoil of his life, he could scarcely have brought the necessary research. It is not neces-

sary here to enlarge upon the pecuniary transactions connected with these publications.

The failure of the "Queen Hynde," as we have already mentioned, so discouraged him, that he resolved never again to attempt a long poem, and he continued for many years afterwards to write shorter pieces, which have been the gems of Blackwood and of other magazines and annuals.

Among these was a poetical Masque, containing many fine sorgs, written during the visit of George IV. to Scotland, which was published by Blackwood, and for which the only return the Author received was the thanks of the King, in a note from Sir Robert Peel. Amid the embarrassments resulting from his accumulated losses, he was relieved to the amount of about two hundred pounds by the publication of an edition of his best poems, in four volumes, by Messrs Constable & Co.

Blackwood, according to the Shepherd's account, had driven him almost "beyond the bounds of human patience." Besides having been narrow and contracted in his dealings, he has misrepresented him in his magazine. No longer a contributor where he had been a founder, he complains that his sentiments have been caricatured, and his words misquoted. The reader of Blackwood must have noticed in the articles called *The Noctes*, that the Shepherd has often appeared there as a very singular character, and we have not a single doubt

that his boldness of opinion has often been distorted into whimsicality, and indifference to propriety.

Of this publisher he says, "I have often been urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures, as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, *I want but a hair to make a tether of.*" That all this is not said without provocation, may be inferred from an observation in an article of the Quarterly Review, and we cannot help quoting it in this place as irrefragable proof of the Shepherd's just cause of complaint.

"A more worthy, modest, sober, and loyal man does not exist in his Majesty's dominions, than this distinguished poet, whom some of his waggish friends have taken up the idea of exhibiting in print as a sort of boozing buffoon, and who is now, instead of revelling in the license of tavern suppers and party politics, bearing up as he may, against severe and unmerited misfortunes, in as dreary a solitude as ever nursed the melancholy of a poetical temperament."

In 1829, Mr Hogg proposed the publication of a series of Tales, to be called the Altrive Tales, from the name of his residence. A series of negotiations with Mr Blackwood for their publication ended unsuccessfully, and with this result, souring him against the Baillie, he went to London and secured the publication of the first volume there.

Cochrane & Co. brought out the first volume in 1832, in a very handsome form. The plan was to publish twelve volumes of Tales collected among the Scottish Peasantry, and the Author considered the projected work as a probable inheritance for his children, if not a legacy to his country. The first volume, however, is all that has yet appeared.

Mr Hogg's visit to London was, we believe, on the whole unfortunate. His publishers failed, and he was driven to the necessity of throwing himself upon the kindness of his literary friends for temporary assistance. The Shepherd was, for the time, the theme of the newspapers, and a favoured visitant in the houses of the great. He was the principal attraction at a literary festival given at Free Mason's Hall, in honour of Burns, and was toasted and complimented in the most flattering manner. Sir John Malcolm, the author of several important works, particularly a History of Central India, presided, having the Ettrick Shepherd on his right hand, and the two sons of Burns on his left. On the Shepherd's health being given, he returned his acknowledgments in a characteristic address, and related many anecdotes connected with his own life, one of which we have already mentioned.

We believe that he has since published another edition of the Queen's Wake, and a volume of Poems, called the Queer Book.

The nobility subscribed liberally, and one hun-

dred pounds were transmitted him to relieve his immediate embarrassments. Since that period his literary efforts have been of a miscellaneous character, although there can be no doubt that he has been engaged preparing the continuation of the *Altrive Tales*, if not of other works of a different stamp. He still resides at *Altrive*. In its neighbourhood the population is thin, and the land not very fertile. His house is neat and comfortable, without being large. Its situation is picturesque, and it is surrounded with all the temptations which the angler and fowler find so irresistible.

A trout brook runs past the door, and the *Yarrow* and *St Mary's Loch* are not far distant. Inside, the quick eye and ready hand of *Mrs Hogg* are evident in the neatness of the arrangements; while a select library, various pieces of plate, and sporting utensils of different kinds, the gifts of friends, naturally attract the attention of visitors.

He is exceedingly fond of fishing and of the athletic sports still popular in Scotland, and never fails to give a hearty welcome to those who break in upon his retreat.

The following is a list of his works, as far as we have been able to ascertain them.

The Queen's Wake.

Pilgrims of the Sun.

The Hunting of Badlewe.

Madoc of the Moor.
Poetic Mirror.
Dramatic Tales.
Brownie of Bodsbeck.
Winter Evening Tales.
Sacred Melodies.
Border Garland.
Jacobite Relics of Scotland.
The Spy.
Queen Hynde.
The Three Perils of Man.
The Three Perils of Woman.
Confessions of a Sinner.
The Shepherd's Calendar.
A Selection of Songs.
The Queer Book.
The Royal Jubilee.
The Mountain Bard.
The Forest Minstrel.
The Altrive Tales.

In a letter addressed to a friend in America, written 7th March, 1834, he writes:—"I am most proud of being valued so highly by my transatlantic brethren; it unluckily happens, that the older I grow, and the more unfit for mental exertion, the more it is required. I published, the last spring, the Altrive Tales, and in summer, the Queer Book. If the latter has not yet found its way to any of the presses of the States, it might

be of some value to you, as all my best ballads, both humorous and pathetic, are included; but a few of them have appeared in Blackwood.

“I am, likewise, engaged to commence a series of tales in November, which will run from ten to twelve volumes. For though I was a poor shepherd more than half a century ago, I have still got no farther than a poor shepherd to this day.”

The same letter contained a proposition to transfer the copy-right of all his English publications, as they came out. But this, by the copy-right law of the United States, was impracticable. The laws shut out the productions of foreign writers from a participation in the advantages of American publication.

Mr Hogg was, of course, informed of the difficulties in the way, in consequence of the discrimination by our law between the productions of foreigners and native citizens.

Shortly after the publication of the first volume of “The Altrive Tales,” his publishers became unfortunate, and as a natural consequence, our poet suffered by their misfortune. He was reduced at once from the prospect of wealth to that of almost entire poverty, and became, as we have stated, one of the Lions of London, and was feasted and shown about by many of those wealthy men who think they derive a lustre even if it be borrowed from extending a patronising hand over these sons of

genius who are unfortunate enough to be introduced to their society; and we find him present at the anniversary dinner to the memory of Burns, given in the Free Masons' Hall, where Sir John Malcolm, the chairman, was supported by the son of Robert Burns, and had the gratification of having his health proposed in a very flattering manner, to which he replied in a manner as vain as the compliment was flattering.

During his residence in London, he brought out a volume entitled the "Queer Book," which, however, assisted in a very trifling degree the exhausted state of his finances.

Since that time he has returned to his native place, where he continues to live as of old, heartily sick of the southern metropolis, assuring us that he would not exchange "*Auld Reekie*" for a thousand and one of such "rill rall" collections of "*big-gings*," as "*Lunun toun*" presented. Here, in his retreat, he has had time to cool down, and has again become reconciled to his old friend, Christopher North, who appears to be willing to act on the example of Scott, "*let bygones be bygones, Jamie*." He has also lately published a volume of Sermons, which are furnishing material for the small calibre polemic disputers in some of the towns in Scotland, and at present is employed in writing a life of the poet Burns, and also in editing an edition of his works, with notes, etc.!

Sir Walter Scott has elaborately attempted to show, that his birth and family, of themselves, entitled him to the favourable notice of the world, and, in tracing back his pedigree to the Scots of Harden, furnished, as he imagined, conclusive testimony of his claims. In this, we imagine, he has shown a slight weakness of character, since, if we take from him his reputation as the author of the most admirable romances in the English language, we strip him of those qualities which have made him the admiration of mankind.

The Shepherd has, in no instance, discovered a disposition to make any other pretensions to public favour than those which become the most unpretending of the pastoral race. His name, it is true, belongs to a poet of early date, whose muse is not without merit, and whose memory is preserved in the annals of Scotland. But he relies solely on his actual position, for the good-will of the literary world, and by his contributions to letters, he is willing to stand or fall.

In his delineations of Sir Walter Scott, he has been influenced by the love of truth, the partiality of admiration, the frankness of friendship. He has observed much of that great man, which was not visible to less familiar eyes. The Author of Waverley,—in his library, with its carved ceiling, its twenty thousand volumes, and its tall silver urn filled with the bones of Grecian heroes,—seemed

like the Guardian Genius of Antiquity; and his visitors approached him with veneration. The poet of Ettrick saw him as the poet of Abbotsford, and to one who worships in the temple of nature, all other worshippers there, seem but human. It is in this point of view, it strikes us, that Mr Hogg has described Sir Walter Scott, and he enables us to see him in a more natural and pleasing form, or at least one that more allies him to men in general, than we have hitherto been able to do.

The Shepherd is an extraordinary man. "Endowed by nature with a rich and lively imagination, a heart full of the finest sensibilities, and an understanding at once acute and profound, and having lived for many years the most poetical of lives in one of the most poetical of regions, it is no wonder that he should have become a deep and graceful poet of pastoral existence."

Energetic, imaginative, and bold, his compositions are full of originality and power. Mr Cunningham, in his recent History of the Literature of the last fifty years, places him below Burns in "passionate ecstacy." This may be owing to the difference in their nervous temperaments. Both poets came from the humblest walks in life, both have been ardent lovers of the female character, but the Ettrick Shepherd, while he had the canopy of Heaven above him, seems never to have coveted any other shelter.

Fond of rural sports, athletic in his frame, a good bowman, an unerring shot, a keen angler, he has felt himself independent, while "the world was all before him where to choose."

Burns, on the contrary, was happiest when others guided his path, or led him onward in the hope of patronage. When his friends deserted him, his own courage proved traitorous, and he died, "before his time," of a broken heart.

Mr Hogg scarcely knows what despondency has been. When badly treated, he has forgiven his enemy, or laid about him indignantly with his quarter-staff. If he fails in his attempts he straightway tries his fortune again. With his friends, he is gay, frank, hospitable. To him, nothing comes amiss. The crack of his gun is heard, ever and anon, upon the Yarrow side. The play of his rod ripples the surface of St Mary's Loch. In his library, he sits down to study with a cheerful heart, in his parlour he is the soul of kindness to his affectionate wife, the fondest of parents to his "sonsie bairns." He is truly the "Chief of the Peasant School of Poets," and as long as the language of nature is kindred to human hearts, his works will be the subject of constant admiration.

DOMESTIC MANNERS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

IN the following miscellaneous narrative, I do not pretend to give a life of my illustrious and regretted friend. That has been done by half-a-dozen already, and will be given by his son-in-law fully and clearly—the only man who is thoroughly qualified for the task, and is in possession of the necessary documents. The whole that I presume to do, is, after an intimate acquaintance of thirty years, to give a few simple and personal anecdotes, which no man can give but myself. It is well known what Sir Walter was in his study, but these are to show what he was in the parlour, in his family, and among his acquaintances; and, in giving them, I shall in nothing extenuate, or set down aught through partiality, and as for malice, that is out of the question.

The first time I ever saw Sir Walter was one fine day in the summer of 1801. I was busily engaged working in the field at Ettrick-house, when

old Wat Shiel came posting over the water to me and told me that I boud to gang away down to the Ramsey-cleuch as fast as my feet could carry me, for there were some gentlemen there who wanted to see me directly.

“Wha can be at the Ramsey-cleuch that want to see me, Wat?”

“I coudna say, for it wasna me they spake to i’ the bygangin’, but I’m thinking it’s the SHIRRA an’ some o’ his gang.”

“I was rejoiced to hear this, for I had seen the first volumes of the “Minstrely of the Border,” and had copied a number of ballads from my mother’s recital, or chaunt rather, and sent them to the editor preparatory to the publication of a third volume. I accordingly flung down my hoe and hasted away home to put on my Sunday clothes, but before reaching it I met the SHIRRA and Mr William Laidlaw, coming to visit me. They alighted, and remained in our cottage a considerable time, perhaps nearly two hours, and we were friends on the very first exchange of sentiments. It could not be otherwise, for Scott had no duplicity about him, he always said as he thought. My mother chaunted the ballad of Old Maitlan’ to him, with which he was highly delighted, and asked her if she thought it ever had been in print? And her answer was, “O na, na, sir, it never was printed i’ the world, for my bro-

thers an' me learned it an' many mae frae auld Andrew Moor, and he learned it frae auld Baby Mettlin, wha was housekeeper to the first laird of Tushilaw. She was said to hae been another nor a gude ane, an' there are many queer stories about hersel', but O, she had been a grand singer o' auld songs an' ballads."

"The first laird of Tushilaw, Margaret?" said he, "then that must be a very old story indeed?"

"Ay, it is that, sir! It is an auld story! But mair nor that, excepting George Warton an' James Stewart, there war never ane o' my sangs prentit till ye prentit them yoursel', an' ye hae spoilt them awthegither. They were made for singing an' no for reading; but ye hae broken the charm now, an' they'll never be sung mair. An' the worst thing of a', they're nouthier right spell'd nor right setten down."

"Take ye that, Mr Scott," said Laidlaw.

Scott answered with a hearty laugh, and the quotation of a stanza from Wordsworth, on which my mother gave him a hearty rap on the knee with her open hand, and said, "Ye'll find, however, that it is a' true that I'm tellin' ye." My mother has been too true a prophetess, for from that day to this, these songs, which were the amusement of every winter evening, have never been sung more.

We were all to dine at Ramsey-cleuch with the Messrs Brydon, but Scott and Laidlaw went away

to look at some monuments in Ettrick church-yard, and some other old thing, I have forgot what, and I was to follow. On going into the stable-yard at Ramsey-clench I met with Mr Scott's groom, a greater original than his master, at whom I asked if the SHIRRA was come?

"Oo ay, lad, the Shirra's come," said he. "Are ye the chap that mak's the auld ballads, an' sings them sae weel?"

I said, I fancied I was he that he meant, though I could not say that I had ever made ony very auld ballads.

"Ay, then, lad, gang your ways into the house, and speir for the Shirra. They'll let ye see where he is, an' he'll be very glad to see ye, that I'll assure ye o'."

During the sociality of the evening, the discourse ran very much on the different breeds of sheep, that everlasting drawback on the community of Ettrick Forest. The original black-faced forest breed being always denominated the *short sheep*, and the Cheviot breed the *long sheep*. The disputes at that time ran very high about the practicable profits of each. Mr Scott, who had come into that remote district to visit a bard of Nature's own making and preserve what little fragments remained of the country's legendary lore, felt himself rather bored with the everlasting question of the long and short sheep. So, at length, putting

on his most serious calculating face, he turned to Mr Walter Brydon, and said, "I am rather at a loss regarding the merits of this *very* important question. How long must a sheep actually measure to come under the denomination of a *long sheep*?"

Mr Brydon, who, in the simplicity of his heart, neither perceived the quiz nor the reproof, fell to answer with great sincerity, "It's the woo', sir; it's the woo' that mak's the difference, the lang sheep hae the short woo' an' the short sheep hae the lang thing, an' these are just kind o' names we gie them, ye see."

Laidlaw got up a great guffaw, on which Scott could not preserve his face of strict calculation any longer; it went gradually awry, and a hearty laugh followed. When I saw the very same words, repeated near the beginning of the *Black Dwarf*, how could I be mistaken of the author? It is true that Johnie Ballantyne swore me into a nominal acquiescence to the contrary for several years, but in my own mind I could never get the better of that and several other similar coincidences.

The next day we went off, five in number, to visit the wilds of Rankleburn, to see if, on the farms of Buccleugh and Mount Comyn, the original possession of the Scotts, there were any relics of antiquity which could mark out the original residence of the chiefs whose distinction it was to

become the proprietors of the greater part of the border districts. We found no remains of either tower or fortalice, save an old chapel and churchyard, and the remnants of a kiln-mill and mill-dam; where corn never grew, but where, as old Satchells very appropriately says :

“ Had heather bells been corn o’ the best,
The Buccleuch mill would have had a noble grist.”

It must have been used for grinding the chief’s black mails, which it is well known were all paid to him in kind; and an immense deal of victual is still paid to him in the same way, the origin of which no man knows.

Besides having been mentioned by Satchells, the most fabulous historian that ever wrote, there was a remaining tradition in the country that there was a font-stone of blue marble, out of which the ancient heirs of Buccleuch were baptized, covered up among the ruins of the old church. Mr Scott was curious to see if we could discover it, but on going among the ruins where the altar was known to have been, we found the rubbish at that spot dug out to the foundation, we knew not by whom, but it was manifest that the font had either been taken away, or that there was none there. I never heard since that it had ever been discovered by any one.

As there appeared, however, to have been a

sort of recess in the eastern gable, we fell a-turning over some loose stones, to see if the baptismal font was not there, when we came to one-half of a small pot encrusted thick with rust. Mr Scott's eyes brightened, and he swore it was part of an ancient consecrated helmet. Laidlaw, however, felt a picking and scratching with great patience until at last he came to a layer of pitch inside, and then, with a malicious sneer, he said, "The truth is, Mr Scott, it's nouthier mair nor less than an auld tar-pot, that some of the farmers hae been buisting their sheep out o' i' the kirk lang syne." Sir Waker's shaggy eye-brows dipped deep over his eyes, and, suppressing a smile, he turned and strode away as fast as he could, saying, that "we had just rode all the way to see that there was nothing to be seen."

He was, at that time, a capital horseman, and was riding on a terribly high-spirited grey nag, which had the perilous fancy of leaping every drain, rivulet, and ditch that came in our way. The consequence was, that he was everlastingly bogging himself, while sometimes the rider kept his seat in spite of the animal's plunging, and at other times he was obliged to extricate himself the best way he could. In coming through a place called the Milsey Bog, I said to him, "Mr Scott, that's the maddest de'il of a beast I ever saw.

Can you no gar him tak' a wee mair time? he's just out o' ae lair intil another wi' ye."

"Ay," said he, "he and I have been very often like the Pechs (*Picts*) these two days past, we could stand straight up and tie the lachets of our shoes." I did not understand the allusion, nor do I yet, but those were his words.

We visited the old castles of Tushilaw and Thirlstane, dined and spent the afternoon and the night with Mr Brydon of Crosslee. Sir Walter was all the while in the highest good humour, and seemed to enjoy the range of mountain solitude which we traversed, exceedingly. Indeed, I never saw him otherwise in the fields. On the rugged mountains, and even toiling in the Tweed to the waist, I have seen his glee surpass that of all other men. His memory, or, perhaps I should say, his recollection, was so capacious, so sterling, and minute, that a description of what I have witnessed regarding it would not gain credit. When in Edinburgh, and even at Abbotsford, I was often obliged to apply to him for references in my historical tales, that so I might relate nothing of noblemen and gentlemen named that was not strictly true. I never found him at fault. In that great library, he not only went uniformly straight to the book, but ere ever he stirred from the spot, turned up the page which contained the information I wanted. I saw a pleasant instance of this retentiveness of memory

recorded lately of him, regarding Campbell's PLEASURES OF HOPE, but I think I can relate a more extraordinary one.

He, and Skene of Rubislaw, and I were out one night about midnight, leistering kippers in Tweed,* about the end of January, not long after the opening of the river for fishing, which was then on the tenth, and Scott having a great range of the river himself, we went up to the side of the Rough haugh of Elibank; but when we came to kindle our light, behold our peat was gone out. This was a terrible disappointment, but to think of giving up our sport was out of the question, so we had no other shift save to send Rob Fletcher all the way through the darkness, the distance of two miles, for another fiery peat.

The night was mild, calm, and as dark as pitch, and while Fletcher was absent we three sat down on the brink of the river, on a little green sward which I never will forget, and Scott desired me to sing them my ballad of "Gilman's-cleuch." Now, be it remembered, that this ballad had never been printed, I had merely composed it by rote, and, on finishing it three years before, had sung it once over to Sir Walter. I began it, at his request, but at the eighth or ninth stanza I stuck in it, and

*Sir Walter alludes in the notes to his collected work by Cadell, to his "fire hunting" expeditions. Hogg enables us to fill up the outline of one of them.

could not get on with another verse, on which he began it again and recited it every word from beginning to end. It being a very long ballad, consisting of eighty-eight stanzas, I testified my astonishment, knowing that he had never heard it but once, and even then did not appear to be paying particular attention. He said he had been out with a pleasure party as far as the opening of the Frith of Forth, and, to amuse the company, he had recited both that ballad and one of Southey's, (The Abbot of Aberbrothock,) both of which ballads he had only heard once from their respective authors, and he believed he recited them both without misplacing a word.

Rob Fletcher came at last, and old Mr Laidlaw of the Peel with him, carrying a lantern, and into the river we plunged in a frail bark which had suffered some deadly damage in bringing up. We had a fine blazing light, and the salmon began to appear in plenty, "turning up sides like swine;"* but woe be to us, our boat began instantly to manifest a disposition to sink, and in a few minutes we reached Gleddie's Weal, the deepest pool in all that part of Tweed. When Scott saw the terror that his neighbour old Peel was in, he laughed till the tears blinded his eyes. Always the more mischief the better sport for him. "For God's sake, push

* Guy Mannering.

her to the side!" roared Peel. "Oh, she goes fine," said Scott.

"'An' gin the boat war bottomless,
An' seven miles to row.'"

A verse of an old song; and during the very time he was reciting these lines, down went the boat to the bottom, plunging us all into Tweed, over head and ears. It was no sport to me, at all, for I had no change of raiment at Ashiesteel, but that was a glorious night for Scott, and the next day was no worse.

I remember leaving my own cottage here one morning with him, accompanied by my dear friend, William Laidlaw, and Sir Adam Ferguson, to visit the tremendous solitudes of Loch-Skene and the Grey-mare's-tail. I conducted them through that wild region by a path, which, if not rode by Clavers, as reported, never was rode by another gentleman. Sir Adam rode inadvertently into a gulf and got a sad fright, but Sir Walter, in the very worst paths, never dismounted, save at Loch-Skene to take some dinner. We went to Moffat that night, where we met with lady Scott and Sophia, and such a day and night of glee I never witnessed. Our very perils were to him matter of infinite merriment; and then, there was a short-tempered boot-boy at the inn, who wanted to pick a quarrel with him for some of his sharp retorts,

at which Scott laughed till the water ran over his cheeks.

I was disappointed in never seeing some incident in his subsequent works laid in a scene resembling the rugged solitude around Loch-Skene, for I never saw him survey any with so much attention. A single serious look at a scene generally filled his mind with it, and he seldom took another. But, here, he took the names of all the hills, their altitudes, and relative situations with regard to one another, and made me repeat all these several times. Such a scene may occur in some of his works which I have not seen, and I think it will, for he has rarely ever been known to interest himself either in a scene or a character, which did not appear afterwards in all its most striking peculiarities.

There are not above three people now living, who, I think, knew Sir Walter better, and who understood his character better than I did, and I once declared that if I outlived him, I should draw a mental and familiar portrait of him; the likeness of which to the original could not be disputed. In the mean time, this is only a reminiscence, in my own homely way, of an illustrious friend among the mountains. That revered friend is now gone, and the following pages are all that I deem myself at liberty to publish concerning him.

The enthusiasm with which he recited and

spoke of our ancient ballads, during that first tour through the Forest, inspired me with a determination immediately to begin and imitate them, which I did, and soon grew tolerably good at it. I dedicated "The Mountain Bard," to him:

Bless'd be his generous heart, for aye,
 He told me where the relic lay,
 Pointed my way with ready will,
 Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill;
 Watch'd my first notes with curious eye,
 And wonder'd at my minstrelsy:
 He little ween'd a parent's tongue
 Such strains had o'er my cradle sung.

The only foible I ever could discover in the character of Sir Walter, was a too strong leaning to the old aristocracy of the country. His devotion for titled rank was prodigious, and, in such an illustrious character, altogether out of place. It amounted almost to adoration, and, not to mention the numerous nobility whom I have met at his own house and in his company, I shall give a few instances of that sort of feeling in him to which I allude.

Although he, of course, acknowledged Buccleuch as the head and chief of the whole clan of Scott, yet he always acknowledged Harden as his immediate chieftain, and head of that powerful and numerous sept of the name, and Sir Walter was wont often to relate, how he, and his father before

him, and his grandfather before that, always kept their Christmas with Harden in acknowledgment of their vassalage. This he used to tell with a degree of exultation, which I always thought must have been astounding to every one who heard it; as if his illustrious name did not throw a blaze of glory on the house of Harden a hundred times more than that van of old border barbarians, however brave, could throw over him.

He was, likewise, descended from the chiefs of Haliburton and Rutherford, on the maternal side, and to the circumstance of his descent from these three houses he adverted so often, mingling their arms in his escutcheon, that to me, alas! who, to this day could never be brought to discover any distinction in ranks, save what was constituted by talents or moral worth, it appeared perfectly ludicrous, thinking, as no man could help thinking, of the halo which his genius shed over those families, while he only valued himself as a descendant of theirs.

I may mention one other instance, at which I was both pleased and mortified. We chanced to meet at a great festival at Bowhill, when Duke Charles was living and in good health. The company being very numerous, there were two tables set in the dining-room, one along and one across. They were nearly of the same length, but at the one along the middle of the room all the ladies were

seated mixed alternately with gentlemen, and at this table all were noble, save, if I remember aright, Sir Adam Ferguson, whose everlasting good humour insures him a passport into every company. But I, having had some chat with the ladies before dinner, and always rather a flattered pet with them, imagined they could not possibly live without me, and placed myself among them. But I had a friend at the cross table, at the head of the room, who saw better. Sir Walter, who presided there, arose and addressing the Duke of Buccleuch, requested of him, as a particular favour and obligation, that he would allow Mr Hogg to come to his table, for that, in fact, he could not do without him; and, moreover, he added,

If ye reave the Hoggs o' Fauldshope,
Ye harry Harden's gear.

I, of course, got permission, and retired to Sir Walter's table, when he placed me on the right hand of the gentleman on his right hand, who, of course, was Scott of Harden. And yet, notwithstanding the broad insinuation about the Hoggs of Fauldshope, I sat beside that esteemed gentleman the whole night, and all the while took him for an English clergyman! I knew there were some two or three clergymen of rank there, connected with the family, and I took Harden for one of them; and though I was mistaken, I still say, he ought

to have been one. I was dumb-founded next day, when the Duke told me, that my divine whom I thought so much of, was Scott of Harden, for I would have liked so well to have talked with him about old matters, my forefathers having been vassals under that house, on the lands of Fauldshope, for more than two centuries, and were only obliged to change masters with the change of proprietors. It was doubtless owing to this connection, that my father had instilled into my youthful mind so many traditions relating to the house of Harden, of which I have made considerable use.

But the anecdote which I intended to relate, before my ruling passion of egotism came across me, was this. When the dinner came to be served, Sir Walter refused to let a dish be set on our table,* which had not been first presented to the Duke and the nobility. "No, no!" said he. "This is literally a meeting of the Clan and its adherents, and we shall have one dinner in the feudal style, it may be but for once in our lives."

As soon as the Duke perceived this whim, he

* Sir Walter, practical, and with a strong grasp of real life in his poetry, was always endeavouring to live in a world of fiction. His *Abbotsford*, the dinner here narrated, and the reception of the king at Edinburgh were continuous efforts to transplant himself into another age—not unlike children playing *Crusaders*, *Reavers*, *Robinson Crusoes*, &c.

admitted of it, although I believe the dishes were merely set down and lifted again. In the mean time, the venison and beef stood on the side-board, which was free to all, so that we were all alike busy from the beginning. At the end of our libations, and before we parted, some time in the course of the morning, the Duke set his one foot on the table and the other on his chair, requesting us all to do the same, with which every man complied, and in that position he sang, " Johnie Cope, are ye wauken-yet ? " while all joined in the chorus. Sir Walter set his weak foot on the table and kept his position steadily, apparently more firm than when he stood on the floor, joining in the chorus with his straight-forward bass voice* with great glee, enjoying the whole scene exceedingly, as he did every scene of hilarity that I ever saw. But though a more social companion never was born, he never filled himself drunk. He took always his wine after dinner, and, at least for upwards of twenty years, a little gin toddy after supper, but he was uniformly moderate in eating and drinking. He liked a good breakfast, but often confessed that he never knew what a good breakfast was till he came to my cottage, but he should

* Which means, we suppose, a voice that never varied its notes ; no—

winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out.

never want it again, and he kept steadily to his resolution.

He was a most extraordinary being. How or when he composed his voluminous works, no man could tell. When in Edinburgh, he was bound to the Parliament-house all the forenoon. He never was denied to any living, neither lady nor gentleman, poor nor rich, and he never seemed discomposed when intruded on, but always good-humoured and kind. Many a time have I been sorry for him, for I have remained in his study, in Castle-street, in hopes to get a quiet word of him, and witnessed the admission of ten intruders, forebymyself. Noblemen, gentlemen, painters, poets, and players, all crowded to Sir Walter, not to mention booksellers and printers, who were never absent, but these spoke to him privately. When at Abbotsford, for a number of years his house was almost constantly filled with company, for there was a correspondence carried on, and always as one freight went away, another came. It was impossible not to be sorry for the time of such a man thus broken in upon. I felt it exceedingly, and once, when I went down by particular invitation to stay a fortnight, I had not the heart to stay any longer than three days, and that space was generally the length of my visits. But Sir Walter never was discomposed. He was ready, as soon as breakfast was over, to accompany his guests

wherever they chose to go, to stroll in the wood, or take a drive up to Yarrow, or down to Melrose or Dryburgh, where his revered ashes now repose. He was never out of humour when well, but when ill he was very cross, he being subject to a bilious complaint of the most dreadful and severe nature, accompanied by pangs the most excruciating,* and when under the influence of that malady it was not easy to speak to him, and I found it always the best plan to keep a due distance. But then his sufferings had been most intense, for he told me one day, when he was sitting as yellow as a primrose, that roasted salt had been prescribed to lay on the pit of his stomach, which was applied, and the next day it was discovered that his breast was all in a blister, and the bosom of his shirt burnt to an izel, and yet he never felt it!

But to return to our feast at Bowhill, from which I have strangely wandered, although the best of the fun is yet to come. When the Duke retired to the drawing-room he deputed Sir Alexander Don, who sat next him, to his chair. We had long before been all at one table. Sir Alex-

* This fact—which we do not recollect to have seen noticed before, accounts for some inequalities of temper we have heard laid to Sir Walter's charge—his uncourteous treatment of Lord Holland, &c. Before blaming any one for such freaks, we ought always to inquire into the state of the stomach.

ander instantly requested a bumper out of champagne glasses to the Duke's health, with all the honours. It was instantly complied with, and every one drank it to the bottom. Don then proposed the following of so good an example as his Grace had set us, and accordingly we were all obliged to mount our chairs again, and setting one foot on the table, sing Johnie Cope over again. Every one at least attempted it, and Sir Alexander sang the song in most capital style. The Scotts, and the Elliotts, and some Taitts, now began to fall with terrible thuds on the floor, but Sir Walter still kept his station as steady as a rock, and laughed immoderately. But this was too good fun to be given up. The Marquis of Queensberry, who was acting as Croupier, said that such a loyal and social Border Clan could never separate without singing "God save the King," and that though we had drunk to his health at the beginning, we behoved to do it again and join in the anthem. We were obliged to mount our chairs again, and in the same ticklish position, sing the King's Anthem. Down we went, one after another. Nay, they actually fell in heaps above each other. I fell off and took a prodigious run to one corner of the room, against which I fell, which created great merriment. There were not above six stood the test this time, out of from thirty to forty. Sir Walter did, and he took all the latter bumpers off

to the brim. He had a good head more ways than one.

There was no man who ever testified more admiration, and even astonishment, than he did at my poetical productions, both songs and poems, and sometimes in very high terms before his most intimate friends. It was somewhat different with regard to my prose works, with which he uniformly found fault, and always with the disagreeable adjunction, "how good they might have been made with a little pains." When *The Three Perils of Man* was first put to the press, he requested to see the proof slips, Ballantyne having been telling him something about the work. They were sent to him on the instant, and on reading them he sent expressly for me as he wanted to see me, and speak with me, about my forthcoming work. We being both at that time residing in Edinburgh, I attended directly, and I think I remember every word that passed. Indeed, so implicit was my dependance on his friendship, his good taste, and judgment, that I never forgot a sentence nor a word that he said to me about my own works, but treasured them up in my heart.

"Well, Mr Hogg, I have read over your proofs with a great deal of pleasure, and, I confess with some little portion of dread. In the first place, the meeting of the two princesses, at Castle Weiry is excellent. I have not seen any modern

thing more truly dramatic. The characters are strongly marked, old Peter Chisholme's in particular. Ah! man, what you might have made of that with a little more refinement, care, and patience! But it is always the same with you, just hurrying on from one vagary to another, without consistency or proper arrangement."

"Dear Mr Scott, a man canna do the thing that he canna do."

"Yes, but you *can* do it. Witness your poems, where the arrangements are all perfect and complete; but in your prose works, with the exception of a few short tales, you seem to write merely by random, without once considering what you are going to write about."

"You are not often wrong, Mr Scott, and you were never righter in your life than you are now, for when I write the first line of a tale or novel, I know not what the second is to be, and it is the same way in every sentence throughout. When my tale is traditionary, the work is easy, as I then see my way before me, though the tradition be ever so short, but in all my prose works of imagination, knowing little of the world, I sail on without star or compass."

"I am sorry to say, that this is too often apparent. But, in the next place, and it was on that account I sent for you, do you not think there is some little danger in making Sir Walter

Scott, of Buccleuch, the hero of this wild extravagant tale ?”

“ The devil a bit.”

“ Well, I think differently. The present chief is your patron, your sincere friend, and your enthusiastic admirer. Would it not then be a subject of regret, not only to yourself and me, but to all Scotland, should you, by any rash adventure, forfeit the countenance and friendship of so good and so great a man ?”

“ There’s nae part o’ that at a’, Mr Scott. The Sir Walter of my tale is a complete hero throughout, and is never made to do a thing, or say a thing, of which his descendant our present chief winna he proud.”

“ I am not quite sure of that. Do you not think you have made him a rather too selfish character ?”

“ O, ay, but ye ken they were a’ a little gi’en that gate, else how could they hae gotten haud o’ a’ the south o’ Scotland, naebody kens how.”

Sir Walter then took to himself a hearty laugh, and then pronounced these very words. “ Well, Hogg, you appear to me just now like a man dancing upon a rope or wire, at a great height ; if he is successful and finishes his dance in safety, he has accomplished no great matter ; but if he makes a slip, he gets a devil of a fall.”

“ Never say another word about it, Mr Scott,

I'm satisfied ; the designation shall be changed throughout, before I either eat or sleep." And I kept my word.

I went, when in Edinburgh, at his particular request, two or three days every week to breakfast with him, as I was then always sure of an hour's conversation with him, before he went to the Parliament house, and I often went for many days successively, as I soon found it was impossible to be in his company without gaining advantage. But there was one Sunday morning I found him in very bad humour indeed. He was sitting at his desk in his study at Castle-street, and when I went in he looked up to me with a visage as stern as that of a judge going to pronounce sentence on a malefactor, and at the same time, he neither rose nor saluted me, which was always his wont, and the first words that he addressed to me were these, " Mr Hogg, I am very angry with you, I tell you it plainly, and I think I have a right to be so. I demand, sir, an explanation of a sentence in your *Spy* of yesterday."

Knowing perfectly well to what sentence he alluded, my peasant blood began to boil, and I found it rushing to my head and face most violently, as I judged myself by far the most aggrieved. " Then I must demand an explanation from you, Mr Scott," said I, " Were you the author of the article alluded to in my paper, which places you

at the head, and me at the tail, nay, as the very dregs of all the poets of Britain?"

"What right had you, sir, to suppose that I was the author of it?" said he, in a perfect rage.


"Nay, what right had *you* to suppose that you were the author of it, that you are taking it so keenly to yourself?" said I. "The truth is, that when, I wrote the remarks, I neither knew nor cared who was the author of the article alluded to; but before the paper went to press, I believed it to have been Mr Southey, for Johnie Ballantyne told me so, and swore to it; but if the feather suits your cap, your are perfectly welcome to it."

"Very well, Hogg," said he, "that is spoken like a man, and like yourself; I am satisfied. I thought it was meant as personal to me in particular. But never mind. We are friends again as usual. Sit down and we will go to our breakfast together immediately, and it shall never more be mentioned between us."

Mr Southey long afterwards told me, that he was not the author of that article, and he believed it to have been written by Scott. If it was, it was rather too bad of him; but he never said it was not his. It was a review of modern literature in the Edinburgh Annual Register. As some readers of these anecdotes may be curious to see the offensive passage in the *SPY*, I shall here extract it; that work being long ago extinct, and only occa-

sionally mentioned by myself, as a parent will sometimes mention the name of a dear, unfortunate, lost child, who has been forgotten by all the world beside.

“The papers which have given the greatest personal offence are those of Mr Shuffleton, which popular clamour obliged the editor reluctantly to discontinue. Of all the poets and poetesses whose works are there emblematically introduced, one gentleman alone stood the test, and his firmness was even by himself attributed to forgiveness. All the rest, male and female, tossed up their noses and pronounced the writer an ignorant and an incorrigible barbarian. THE SPY hereby acknowledges himself the author of these papers, and adheres to the figurative characters he has there given of the poetical works of these authors. He knows, that, in a future edition, it is expected that they are all to be altered or obliterated. They never shall! Though the entreaties of respected friends prevailed on him to relinquish a topic which was his favourite one, what he has published, he has published, and no private consideration shall induce him to an act of such manifest servility as that of making a renunciation. Those who are so grossly ignorant as to suppose the figurative characteristics of the poetry, as having the smallest reference to the personal characters of the authors, are below reasoning with. And since it has of



late become fashionable with some great poets, to give an estimate of their great powers in periodical works of distinction, surely others have an equal right to give likewise their estimates of the works of such bards. It is truly amusing to see how artfully a gentleman is placed at the head of a school of poetry, and one who is, perhaps, his superior at the tail of it. How he can make himself to appear as the greatest genius that ever existed. With what address he can paint his failings as beauties, and depict his greatest excellencies as slight defects, finding fault only with those parts which every one must admire. The design is certainly an original, though not a very creditable one. Great authors cannot remain always concealed, let them be as cautious as they will; the smallest incident often assisting curiosity in the discovery."—*Spy for August 24th*, 1811.

This last sentence, supposing Sir Walter to have been the author, which I now suspect he was, certainly contained rather too broad and too insolent a charge to be passed over with impunity. When I wrote it, I believed he was, but had I continued to believe so, I would not have called on him the next morning after the publication of the paper. Luckily, before putting the paper to press, I waited on Mr John Ballantyne, and asked him who was the author of that insolent paper in

his Annual Register, which placed me as the dregs of all the poets in Britain.

“O, the paper was sent to our office by Southey,” said he, “you know he is editor and part proprietor of the work, and we never think of objecting to any thing that he sends us. Neither my brother James, nor I, ever read the article until it was published, and we both thought it was a good one.”

Now this was a story, beside the truth, for I found out afterwards that Mr James Ballantyne had read the paper from manuscript, in a library, long before its publication, where it was applauded in the highest terms. I, however, implicitly believed it, as I have done every body all my life. At that period, the whole of the aristocracy and literature of our country were set against me, and determined to keep me down;* nay, to crush me to a nonentity; thanks be to God! I have lived to see the sentiments of my countrymen completely changed.

There was once more, and only once, that I found Sir Walter in the same querulous humour with me. It was the day after the publication of my *Brownie of Bodsbeck*. I called on him after his return from the Parliament house, on pretence of asking his advice about some very important affair, but in fact, to hear his sentiments of my new work. His shaggy eye-brows were hanging very low down, a bad prelude, which I knew too

* What a horrible conspiracy!

well. "I have read through your new work, Mr Hogg," said he, "and must tell you downright plainly, as I always do, that I like it very ill—very ill indeed."

"What for, Mr Scott?"

"Because it is a false and unfair picture of the times and the existing characters, altogether an exaggerated and unfair picture!"

"I dinna ken, Mr Scott. It is the picture I have been bred up in the belief o' sin' ever I was born, and I had it frae them whom I was most bound to honour and believe. An' mair nor that, there is not one single incident in the tale—not one—which I cannot prove from history, to be literally and positively true. I was obliged sometimes to change the situations to make one part coalesce with another, but in no one instance have I related a story of a cruelty or a murder which is not literally true. An' that's a great deal mair than you can say for your tale o' Auld Mortality."

"You are overshooting the mark now, Mr Hogg. I wish it were my tale. But it is *not* with regard to that, that I find fault with your tale at all, but merely because it is an unfair and partial picture of the age in which it is laid."

"Na, I shouldna hae said it was *your* tale, for ye hae said to your best friends that it was not, an' there I was wrang. Ye may hinder a man to speak, but ye canna hinder him to think, an' I can

speak at the thinking. But, whoever wrote Auld Mortality, kenning what I ken, an' what ye ken, I wadna wonder at you being ill-pleased with my tale, if ye thought it written as a counterpoise to that, but ye ken weel it was written lang afore the other was heard of."

"Yes, I know that a part of it was in manuscript last year, but I suspect it has been greatly exaggerated since."

"As I am an honest man, sir, there has not been a line altered or added, that I remember of. The original copy was printed. Mr Blackwood was the only man, beside yourself, who saw it. He read it painfully, which I now know you did not, and I appeal to him."

"Well, well. As to its running counter to Old Mortality, I have nothing to say. Nothing in the world. I only tell you, that with the exception of Old Nanny, the crop-eared Covenanter, who is by far the best character you ever drew in your life, I dislike the tale exceedingly, and assure you it is a distorted, a prejudiced, and untrue picture of the Royal party."

"It is a devilish deal truer than yours though, and on that ground I make my appeal to my country."

And with that I rose and was going off in a great huff.

"No, no ! stop !" cried he, "you are not to go,

and leave me again in bad humour. You ought not to be offended with me for telling you my mind freely."

"Why, to be sure, it is the greatest folly in the world for me to be sae. But ane's beuks are like his bairns, he disna like to hear them spoken ill o', especially when he is conscious that they dinna deserve it."

Sir Walter, then, after his customary short good-humoured laugh, repeated a proverb about the Gordons, which was exceedingly *apropos* to my feelings at the time, but all that I can do, I cannot remember it, though I generally remembered every thing that he said of any import. He then added, "I wish you to take your dinner with me to-day. There will be nobody with us, but James Ballantyne, who will read you something new, and I wanted to ask you particularly about something which has escaped me at this moment. Ay, it was this. Pray had you any tradition on which you founded that ridiculous story about the Hunt of Eildon?"

"Yes, I had," said I, "as far as the two white hounds are concerned, and of the one pulling the poisoned cup twice out of the king's hand when it was at his lips."

"That is very extraordinary," said he, "for the very first time I read it, it struck me I had heard something of the same nature before, but

how or where I cannot comprehend. I think it must have been when I was on the nurse's knee, or lying in the cradle, yet I was sure I had heard it. It is a very ridiculous story, that, Mr Hogg. The most ridiculous of any modern story I ever read. What a pity it is that you are not master of your own capabilities, for that tale might have been made a good one."

It was always the same on the publication of any of my prose works. When *The Three Perils of Man* appeared, he read me a long lecture on my extravagance in Demonology, and assured me I had ruined one of the best tales in the world. It is manifest, however, that the tale had made no ordinary impression on him, as he subsequently copied the whole of the main plot into his tale of *Castle Dangerous*.

Sir Walter's conversation was always amusing, always interesting. There was a conciseness, a candour and judiciousness in it which never was equalled. His anecdotes were without end, and I am almost certain they were all made off-hand, for I never heard one of them either before or after. His were no Joe Miller's jokes. The only time ever his conversation was to me perfectly uninteresting, was with Mr John Murray, of Albemarle-street, London. Their whole conversation was about noblemen, parliamenters, and literary men of all grades, none of which I had ever heard

of or cared about; but every one of which Mr Murray seemed to know, with all their characters, society, and propensities. This information Sir Walter seemed to drink in with as much zest as I did his whisky toddy, and this conversation was carried on for two days and two nights, with the exception of a few sleeping hours; and there I sat beside them, all the while, like a perfect stump; a sheep who never got in a word, not even a bleat. I wish I had the same opportunity again.

I first met with Sir Walter, at my own cottage in the wilds of Ettrick Forest, as above narrated, and I then spent two days and two nights in his company. When we parted, he shook my hand most heartily, and invited me to his cottage on the banks of the North Esk, above Lasswade. "By all means come and see me," said he "and I will there introduce you to my wife. She is a foreigner, as dark as a blackberry, and does not speak the broad Scots so well as you and me, of course, I don't expect you to admire her much, but I shall assure you of a hearty welcome.

I went and visited him the first time I had occasion to be in Edinburgh, expecting to see Mrs Scott, a kind of half black-a-moor, whom our sheriff had married for a great deal of money. I knew nothing about her, and had never heard of her, save from his own description; but the words, "as dark as a blackberry," had fixed her colour

indelibly on my mind. Judge of my astonishment when I was introduced to one of the most beautiful and handsome creatures, as Mrs Scott, whom I had ever seen in my life. A brunette, certainly, with raven hair and large black eyes, but in my estimation a perfect beauty. I found her quite affable, and she spoke English very well, save that she put always the *d* for the *th*, and left the aspiration of the *h* out altogether. She called me all her life, Mr Og. I understood perfectly well what she said, but, for many years, I could not make her understand what I said; she had frequently to ask an explanation from her husband, and I must say this of lady Scott, though it was well known how jealous she was of the rank of Sir Walter's visitors, yet I was all my life received with the same kindness as if I had been a relation or one of the family, although one of his most homely daily associates. But there were many others, both poets, and play-actors, whom she received with no very pleasant countenance. Jeffrey and his satellites she could not endure, and there was none whom she disliked more than Brougham, for what reason I do not know, but I have heard her misca' him terribly, as well as "dat body Jeffrey." It might be owing to some reasons which I did not know about. After the review of Marmion appeared, she never would speak to Jeffrey again, *for, though not a lady who possessed great depth*

of penetration, she knew how to appreciate the great powers of her lord, from the beginning, and despised all those who ventured to depreciate them.

I have heard Sir Walter, tell an anecdote of this review of *Marmion*.* As he and Jeffrey, Southey, Curwin, and some other body, I have forgotten who, were sailing on Derwent water, at Keswick, in Cumberland, one fine day, Mr Jeffrey, to amuse the party, took from his pocket the manuscript of the review of *Marmion*, and read it throughout. This, I think, was honest in Jeffrey, but the rest of the company were astonished at his insolence, and at some passages did not know where to look. When he had finished, he said, "Well, Scott, what think you of it? what shall be done about it?" "At all events, I have taken my resolution what to do," said Scott, "I'll just sink the boat." The review was a little modified after that.

But to return to Lady Scott, she is cradled in my remembrance, and ever shall be as a sweet, kind, and affectionate creature. When any of the cottagers or retainers about Abbotsford grew ill,

* We have heard this story with a variation. Jeffrey, in his review of *Marmion*, while praising the author's talents highly, introduced some censure. Going to sup with Scott, he, in the honesty of his heart, took the proof-sheets of the review with him and read them aloud. Mr Jeffrey's manner is unfortunate, and he was considerably Scott's junior. Scott and all his friends (his wife in particular,) took the matter in high dudgeon. The review was not modified.

they durst not tell her, as it generally made her worse than the sufferers, and I have heard of her groaning, and occasionally weeping for a whole day and a good part of the night, for an old tailor who was dying, and leaving a small helpless family behind him. Her daughter Anne, was very like her, in the contour and expression of her countenance. Who was Lady Scott originally? I really wish anybody would tell me, for surely somebody must know. There is a veil of mystery hung over that dear lady's birth and parentage, which I have been unable to see through or lift up; and there have been more lies told to me about it, and even published in all the papers of Britain, by those who *ought* to have known than ever was told about those of any woman that ever was born. I have, however, a few cogent reasons for believing that the present Sir Walter's grandfather, was a nobleman of very high rank.*

Like other young authors, Sir Walter was rather vain of his early productions, and liked to make them the subject of conversation. He recited Glenfinlas one day to me on horseback, long before its publication. He read me also, the Lay

* This impression, strange to say, was encouraged by Sir Walter. Falconbridge was contented to be a king's bastard. The anxiety to be connected with nobility by a wife's illegitimacy, is a step beyond this, in aristocratical devotion.

of the *Last Minstrel*, from manuscript, at least, he and William Erskine, (Lord Kinneder,) and James Ballantyne, read it, canto about. He always preferred their readings to his own. Not so with me. I could always take both the poetry and the story along with me, better from his reading than any other body's whatsoever. Even with his deep-toned bass voice, and his Berwick burr, he was a far better reader than he was sensible of.* Every thing that he read was like his discourse, it always made an impression. He likewise read me *Marmion* before it was published, but I think it was then in the press, for a part of it, at least, was read from proof slips and sheets with corrections on the margin. The *Marmion* manuscript was a great curiosity. I wonder what became of it. It was all written off-hand, in post letters, from Ashiesteel, Mainsforth, Rokeby, and London. The readings of *Marmion* began on his own part, I had newly gone to Edinburgh, and knew nothing about the work—had never heard of it. But the next morning after my arrival, on going to breakfast with him, he sought out a proof sheet, and read me his description of my beloved St Mary's Lake, in one of his introductions, I think to canto second, to ask my opinion, as he said, of its correctness, as he had never seen the scene but once. I said, there never was anything more graphic written in

* Just.

this world; and I still adhere to the assertion, so it was no flattery; and I, being perfectly mad about poetry then, begged of him to let me hear the canto that followed that vivid description, expecting to hear something more about my native mountains. He was then, to humour me, obliged to begin at the beginning of the poem, and that day he read me the two first books.

That night my friends Grieve and Morison, who were as great enthusiasts as myself, expressed themselves so bitterly at my advantage over them, that the next morning I took them both with me, and they heard him read the two middle cantos, which I am sure neither of them will ever forget. When we came to the door, Morison said, "For God's sake, Hogg, don't ring."

"What for," said I.

"Because I know there will be something so terribly gruff about him, I dare not for my soul go in," said he.

"You never were so far mistaken in your life," said I, "Sir Walter's manner is just kindness personified," and rang the bell.

When the *Lady of the Lake* was mostly, or at least partly in manuscript, he said to me one evening, "I am going to adventure a poem on the public quite different from my two last, perfectly different in its theme, style, and measure." On which he took the manuscript from his desk, and

read me the course of The Fiery Cross, and the Battle of the Trosachs. I said, "I could not perceive any difference at all between the style of that and his former poems, save that, because it was quite new to me, I thought it rather better." He was not quite well pleased with the remark, and was just saying, I would think differently when I had time to peruse the whole poem, when Sir John Hope came in, and I heard no more.

After that, he never read anything more to me before publishing, save one ghost story. His fame became so firmly established that he cared not a fig for the opinions of his literary friends, before hand. But there was one forenoon he said to me in his study, I have never durst venture upon a real ghost story, Mr Hogg, but you have published some such thrilling ones of late, that I have been this very day employed in writing one. I assure you, "it's no little that gars auld Donald pegh," but yon Lewis stories of yours frightened me so much, that I could not sleep, and now I have been trying my hand on one, and here it is. He read it; but it did not make a great impression on me, for I do not know, at this moment, not having his works by me, where it is published. It was about the ghost of a lady, and, I think, appeared in the Abbot or Monastery. He read me also a humorous poem in manuscript, which has never been published that I know of. It was something about

finding out the happiest man, and making him a present of a new holland shirt.* Paddy got it, who had never known the good of a shirt. Mr Scott asked me what I thought of it. I said, the characters of the various nations were exquisitely hit off, but I thought the winding-up was not so effective as it might have been made. He said he believed I was perfectly right. I never heard what became of that poem, or whether it was ever published or not, for living in the wilderness, as I have done, for the last twenty years, I know very little of what is going on in the literary world. One of Sir Walter's representatives has taken it upon him to assert, that Sir Walter always held me in the lowest contempt! He never was farther wrong in his life, but Sir Walter would still have been farther wrong if he had done so. Of that, posterity will judge; but I assure that individual, that there never was a gentleman in the world, who paid more respect or attention to a friend, than Sir Walter did to me, for the space of the thirty years that we were acquainted. True, he sometimes found fault with me, but in that there was more kindness than all the rest.

* It appeared in the "Sale Room," a four-penny literary weekly, published by John Ballantyne. It is a circumstance not generally known, that a communication to this publication signed Christopher Corduroy, was the first thing that attracted Scott's notice to Lockhart, of whom he previously *knew nothing*.

I must confess, that, before people of high rank, he did not much encourage my speeches and stories. He did not then hang down his brows, as when he was ill-pleased with me, but he raised them up and glowered, and put his upper lip far over the under one, seeming to be always terrified at what was to come out next, and then he generally cut me short, by some droll anecdote, to the same purport of what I was saying. In this he did not give me fair justice, for, in my own broad homely way, I am a very good speaker, and teller of a story too.

Mrs Hogg was a favourite of his. He always paid the greatest deference and attention to her. When we were married, I, of course, took her down to Abbotsford, and introduced her, and though the company was numerous, he did her the honour of leading her into the dining-room and placing her by his side. When the ladies retired, he, before all our mutual friends present, testified himself highly pleased with my choice, and added, that he wondered how I had the good sense and prudence to make such a one, "I dinna thank ye at a' for the compliment, Sir Walter," said I.

As for her, poor woman, she perfectly adored him. There was one day, when he was dining with us at Mount Benger, on going away, he snatched up my little daughter, Margaret Laidlaw, and kissed her, and then laying his hand on her head, said, "God Almighty bless you, my dear

child!" on which my wife burst into tears. On my coming back from seeing him into the carriage, that stood at the base of the hill, I said, "What ailed you, Margaret?"

"O," said she, "I thought if he had but just done the same to them all, I do not know what in the world I would not have given!"

There was another year previous to that, when he was dining with me at the same place, he took a great deal of notice of my only son, James, trying to find out what was in him, by a number of simple questions, not one of which James would answer. He then asked me anent the boy's capabilities. I said he was a very amiable and affectionate boy, but I was afraid he would never be the Cooper of Fogo, for he seemed to be blest with a very thick head. "Why, but Mr. Hogg, you know, it is not fair to lay the saddle upon a foal," said he, "I, for my part, never liked precocity of genius all my life, and can venture to predict, that James will yet turn out an honour to you and all your kin." I was gratified by the prediction, and lost not a word of it.

The boy had at that time taken a particular passion for knives, particularly for large ones, and to amuse him Sir Walter showed him a very large gardener's knife, which he had in his pocket; *which contained a saw*, but I never regarded it, *and would not have known it the next day.* James

however, never forgot it, and never has to this day, and I should like very well, if that knife is still to be found, that James should have it as a keepsake of his father's warmest and most esteemed friend. Col. Ferguson, perceiving the boy's ruling passion, made him a present of a handsome, two-bladed knife. But that made no impression on James. Col. Ferguson he forgot the next day, but Sir Walter he never forgot till he came back again, always denominating him, "The man wi' the gude knife."

The last time Margaret saw him, was at his own house in Maitland-street, a very short time before he finally left it. We were passing from Charlotte square, to make a call in Laurieston, when I said, "see, yon is Sir Walter's house, at yon red lamp." "O let me go in and see him once more!" said she.

"No, no, Margaret," said I, "you know how little time we have, and it would be too bad to intrude on his hours of quiet and study at this time of the day." "O, but I must go in," said she, "and get a shake of his kind, honest hand once more. I cannot go by." So I, knowing that

"Nought's to be won at woman's hand
Unless ye gie her a' the plea,"

was obliged to comply. In we went, and were received with all the affection of old friends, but his

whole discourse was addressed to my wife, while I was left to shift for myself among books and newspapers. He talked to her of our family, and of our prospects of being able to give them a good education, which he recommended at every risk, and at every sacrifice. He talked to her of his own family one by one, and of Mr Lockhart's family, giving her a melancholy account of little Hugh John Lockhart, (the celebrated Hugh Littlejohn,) who was a great favourite of his, but whom, as he said that day, he despaired of ever seeing reach manhood.

The only exchange of words I got with him during that short visit, which did not extend to the space of an hour, was of a very important nature indeed. In order to attract his attention from my wife, to one, who, I thought, as well deserved it, I went close up to him with a scrutinizing look, and said, "Gudeness guide us, Sir Walter, but ye hae gotten a braw gown!" On which he laughed and said, "I got it made for me in Paris, (such a year,) when certain great personages chose to call on me of a morning, and I never thought of putting it on since, until the day before yesterday on finding that my every-day one had been sent to Abbotsford. But I shall always think the more highly of my braw gown, Mr Hogg, for your notice of it." I think it was made of black twilled satin and lined.

But, to return to some general anecdotes with which I could fill volumes,—When I first projected my literary paper, *THE SPY*, I went and consulted him, as I generally did in every thing regarding literature. He shook his head, and let fall his heavy eyebrows, but said nothing. The upper lip came particularly far down. I did not like these prognostics at all; so I was obliged to broach the subject again, without having received one word in answer.

“Do you not think it rather dangerous ground to take after Addison, Johnson, and Henry M’Kenzie?” said he.

“No a bit!” said I, “I’m no the least feared for that. My papers may not be sae yelegant as theirs, but I expect to make them mair original.”

“Yes, they will certainly be original enough, with a vengeance!” said he.

I asked him if he thought threepence would be a remunerating price? He answered, with very heavy brows, that, “taking the extent of the sale into proper calculation, he suspected she must be a fourpenny cut.” He said this with a sneer which I never could forget. I asked him if he would lend me his assistance in it? He said he would first see how I came on, and if he saw the least prospect of my success, he would support me, and with this answer I was obliged to be content. He only sent me one letter for the work, enclosing two

poems of Leyden's. He was, however, right in discouraging it, and I was wrong in adventuring it. I never knew him wrong in any of his calculations or inhibitions but once, and then I am sure my countrymen will join with me in saying that he was wrong. He wrote to me once when I was living in Nithsdale, informing me that he was going to purchase the estate of Broadmeadows, on Yarrow. That he was the highest offerer and was, he believed, sure of getting it, and that he had offered a half more on my account that I might be his chief shepherd, and manager of all his rural affairs. The plan misgave. Mr Boyd overbid him and became the purchaser, on which Sir Walter was so vexed on my account, I having kept myself out of a place, depending upon his, that he actually engaged me to Lord Porchester, as his chief shepherd, where I was to have a handsome house, a good horse, a small pendicle, rent free, and twenty pounds a-year. I approved of the conditions as more than I expected or was entitled to, only they were given with this *proviso*, that "I was to put my poetical talent under lock and key for ever!" I have the letter. Does any body think Sir Walter was right there? I can't believe it, and I am sure my friend, the present Lord Porchester, would have been the last man to have exacted such a stipulation. I spurned the terms, and refused to implement the bargain. This is the

circumstance alluded to in the *Queen's Wake*, as a reflection on Walter the Abbot, which I think it proper to copy here, to save researches for an extract, where it may be impossible to find it. It alludes to the magic harp of Ettrick banks, and Yarrow braes.

“The day arrived—blest be the day,
 Walter the Abbot came that way—
 The sacred relic met his view :
 Ah ! well the pledge of heaven he knew ;
 He screw'd the chords, he tried a strain,
 'Twas wild—he tuned and tried again.
 Then pour'd the numbers, bold and free,
 The ancient magic melody.
 The land was charm'd to list his lays,
 It knew the harp of ancient days.
 The Border Chiefs, that long had been
 In sepulchres, unheard and green,
 Pass'd from their mouldy vaults away
 In armour red and stern array ;
 And by their moonlit halls were seen,
 In vizor, helm, and habergeon.
 Even fairies sought our laud again,
 So powerful was the magic strain.
 Blest be his generous heart for aye,
 He told me where the relic lay,
 Pointed my way with ready will
 Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill ;
 Watch'd my first notes with curious eye,
 And wondered at my minstrelsy.
 He little weened a parent's tongue
 Such strains had o'er my cradle sung !

O, could the bard I loved so long
 Reprove my fond aspiring song?
 Or could his tongue of candour say
 That I should throw my harp away;
 Just when her notes began with skill
 To sound beneath the Southern hill,
 And twine around my bosom's core.
 How could we part for evermore?
 'Twas kindness all,—I cannot blame,
 For bootless is the minstrel flame.
 But sure a bard might well have known
 Another's feelings by his own!

QUEEN'S WAKE. 6th edit. p. 356-7.

I never knew any gentleman so shy and chary of his name and interest as Sir Walter was, and though I know Allan Cunningham and Captain J. G. Burns will not join me in this, "Let every man roose the ford as he finds it." He never would do any thing for me in that, save by the honour of his undeviating friendship and genuine good advices, both of which were of great value to me, insuring me a welcome among all the genteel company of the kingdom, and the other tending greatly to guide my path in a sphere with which I was entirely unacquainted, and these I set a high value on. But he would never bring me forward in any way by the shortest literary remark in any periodical—never would review any of my works, although he once promised to do it. No, he did not promise; he only said before several friends, to

whom he had been speaking very highly of the work, that he was thinking of doing it. But seeing, I suppose, that the poem did not take so well as he had anticipated, he never accomplished his kind intent. I asked him the following year, why he had not fulfilled his promise to me.

"Why the truth is, Hogg," said he, "that I began the thing, and took a number of notes, marking extracts, but I found, that to give a proper view of your poetical progress and character, I was under the necessity of beginning with the ballads, and following through *THE WAKE* and all the rest, and, upon the whole, I felt that we were so much of the same school, that, if I had said of you as I wished to say, I would have been thought by the world to be applauding myself."

I cannot aver that these were Sir Walter's very words, but they were precisely to that purport. But I, like other disappointed men, not being by half satisfied with the answer, said, "Dear Sir Walter, ye can never suppose that I belong to your school o' chivalry! Ye are the king o' that school, but I'm the king o' the mountain and fairy school, which is a far higher ane nor yours."

He rather hung down his brows, and said, "The bolder the attempt to ascend, the greater might be the fall;" and changed the subject, by quoting saying of some old English Baronet in a fox-hunt.

He paid two high compliments to me, without knowing of either, and although some other person should have related these rather than me, I cannot refrain from it. One of them was derogatory to himself too, a thing which a young poet is not very apt to publish. He was, he said, quarter-master to the Edinburgh gentlemen-cavalry, and composed a song for the corps, got a friend to learn it and sing it at the mess, but it did not take very well. At length a Mr Robertson got up and said, "Come, come, that's but a droop of a song. Let us have Donald M'Donald." On which Donald M'Donald was struck up, and was joined in with such glee that all the mess got up, joined hands, and danced round the table, and added Scott, "I joined the ring too and danced as well as I could, and there were four chaps, all of the clan Donachie, who got so elevated that they got upon the top of the table and danced a highland reel to the song." He did not know it was mine until after he had told the anecdote, when I said, "Dear man, that sang's mine, and was written sax or seven years bygane. I wonder ye didna ken that."

There was another day, as we were walking round the north side of St Andrew's Square, to call on Sir C. Sharpe in York Place, he said to me, laughing very heartily, "I found Ballantyne in a fine quandary yesterday, as I called on leaving

the Parliament house. He was standing behind his desk, actually staring, and his mouth quite open. 'I am glad you have come in, Mr Scott,' said he, 'to tell me if you think I am in my right senses, to-day, or that I am in a dream?' 'O, it is quite manifest, from the question, that you are not in your right senses!' said I, what is the matter?' 'Here is a poem sent me by Mr Gillies, to publish in a work of his,' said he, 'It is in his own hand-writing, and the gradation of the ascent is so regular and well-managed, that I am bound to believe it is his. Well, before you came in, I read and read on, in these two proofs, until at last I said to myself, Good Lord, is this the poetry of Mr Gillies that I am reading? I must be asleep and dreaming. And then I bit my little finger, to prove if I was not asleep, and I thought I was not. But sit down and judge for yourself.'

"So James read the poem to me from beginning to end," continued he, "and then said, 'Now, what think you of this?' 'The only thing that I can say,' said I, 'is, that the former part of the poem is very like the writing of a eunuch, and the latter part like that of a man. The style is altogether unknown to me, but Mr Gillies's it cannot be.'" I was sorry I durst not inform him it was mine, for it had been previously agreed between Mr Gillies and me, that no one should know. It was a blank verse poem, but I have en-

tirely forgotten what it was about; the latter half only was mine.

“‘So you say that the poetry is not the composition of Mr Gillies?’ said James.

“‘Yes, I do, positively. The thing is impossible.’

“‘Well, sir, I can take your word for that; and I have *not* lost my senses, nor am I dreaming at all.’”

There was one day that I met with him on the North Bridge, on his return from the Court of Session, when he took my arm, and said, “Come along with me, Hogg, I want to introduce you to a real brownie, one who does a great deal of work for me, for which I am paid rather liberally.” I accompanied him into one of the register offices, where a good-looking, little, spruce fellow, his deputy clerk, I suppose, produced papers, bunch after bunch, to the amount of some hundreds, all of which he signed with W. SCOTT, laughing and chatting with me all the while.* We then took a walk round the Calton Hill, till dinner time, when I went home with him and met Ballantyne and Terry. I think it was on that day, for it was during a walk round the Calton Hill, and I never enjoyed that pleasure with him but twice in my life, that we were discussing the merits of his several poems. The *Lady of the Lake* had had an unprecedented run previous to that, and as it was really

* We recommend this to the special notice of Mr Wallace of Kelly.

my favourite, I was extolling it highly, assured that I was going on safe ground, but I found that he preferred Marmion, and said something to the following effect, 'That the *Lady of the Lake* would always be the favourite with ladies and people who read merely for amusement, but that Marmion would have the preference by real judges of poetry. I have heard people of the first discernment express the same opinion since. For me, I think in the *LADY OF THE LAKE* he reached his acme in poetry; for, in fact, the whole both of his poetry and prose have always appeared to me, as two splendid arches, of which the *Lady of the Lake* is the key-stone of the one, and Guy Mannering and Old Mortality the joint key-stones of the other. I should like very well to write a review of his whole works, but that is quite out of my way at present.

The only other walk that I ever got with him round the Calton Hill was several years subsequent to that. At that time I did not believe that he was the author of the celebrated novels, for Johny Ballantyne had fairly sworn me out of my original fixed belief, so I began about them very freely, and he did the same, laughing heartily at some of the jokes, and often standing still and sitting down, and telling me where he thought the author had succeeded best and where least, and there were some places where he did not scruple to say he had

failed altogether. He never tried to defend any passage when it was attacked, but generally laughed at the remarks.

There cannot be a better trait of Sir Walter's character than this, that all who knew him intimately loved him; nay, many of them almost worshipped him. The affection and subservience of the two Messrs Ballantyne far surpassed description. They were entrusted with all his secrets, and all his transactions, and faithful to the last, and I know, that had he taken some most serious advices which James gave him, he never would have been involved as he was. In James he always reposed the most implicit confidence. John he likewise trusted with everything, and loved him as a wayward brother, but he often broke a joke at his expense. There was one day, I was telling the Sheriff some great secret about the author of a certain work or article, I have quite forgot what it was, when he said, "I suspect you are widely misinformed there, Mr Hogg, for I think I know the author to be a very different person."

"Na, na, Mr Scott, you are clean wrang," said I, "for Johnie Ballantyne tauld me, an' he coudna but ken."

"Ay, but ye should hae ascertained whether it was leeing Johny or true Johny who told you that, before you avouched it; for they are two as different persons as exist on the face of the earth," said

he. "Had James told you so, you might have averred it, for James never diverges from the rightforward truth." As Mr Southey once told me the very same thing, I think I am at liberty to publish the sentiments of two such eminent men, of the amiable deceased. James was a man of pomp and circumstance, but he had a good affectionate heart. It was too good and too kind for this world, and the loss first of his lady, and then of his great patron and friend, broke it, and he followed him instantly to the land of forgetfulness. How strange it is that all connected with those celebrated novels have been hunted off the stage of time as it were together! The publisher, the author, the two printers, and, last of all the corrector of the press, the honest and indefatigable Daniel M'Corkingdale,—all gone! and none to tell the secrets of that faithful and devoted little community.

There was no man knew Scott so well as James Ballantyne, and I certainly never knew a man admire and revere a friend and patron so much. If any person ventured to compare other modern productions with those of Scott, he stared with astonishment, and took it as a personal insult to himself. There was one time, that, in my usual rash, forward way, I said, that Miss Ferrier's novels were better than Sir Walter's. James drew himself up; I wish any reader of this had seen his

looks of utter astonishment, for he was always a sort of actor, James, "What do I hear? what do I hear?" cried he, with prodigious emphasis, "is it possible that I hear, sir, such a sentiment drop from *your* lips?" I was obliged to burst out laughing and run away.

Sir Walter's attached and devoted friends were without number, but William Erskine and James Ballantyne were his constant and daily associates. It is a pity that Ballantyne had not left a written character of him, for he could and would have done him justice. But the interesting part of their correspondence will soon all come to light in Lockhart's life of his illustrious father-in-law. He was the only one I ever knew whom no man, either poor or rich, held at ill-will. I was the only exception myself, that ever came to my knowledge, but that was only for a short season, and all the while it never lessened his interest in my welfare. I found that he went uniformly on one system. If he could do good to any one, he would do it, but he would do harm to no man. He never resented a literary attack, however virulent, of which there were some at first, but always laughed at them. This showed a superiority of mind and greatness of soul which no other young author is capable of. He never retaliated, but trusted to his genius to overcome all; and it was not on a bruised reed that he leaned.

Although so shy of his name and literary assistance, which, indeed, he would not grant to any one, on any account, save to Lockhart, yet to poor men of literary merit, his purse-strings were always open, as far as it was in his power to assist them. I actually knew several unsuccessful authors who for years depended on his bounty for their daily bread. And then there was a delicacy in his way of doing it, which was quite admirable. He gave them some old papers or old ballads to copy for him, pretending to be greatly interested in them, for which he sent them a supply every week, making them believe that they were reaping the genuine fruit of their own labours.

There was one day, when I was chatting with Ballantyne in his office, where I was generally a daily visitor, as well as my illustrious friend, I chanced to say, that I never in my life knew a man like Scott, for that I knew to a certainty, he was at that time, feeling himself a successful author, lending pecuniary assistance to very many unsuccessful ones, and the best thing of all, he never let his left hand know what his right hand was doing.

Ballantyne's face glowed with delight and the tear stood in his eye, "You never were more right in your life," said he, "you never were more right in your life! and I am glad that you know and so duly appreciate the merits of our noble, our

invaluable friend. Look here," and with that he turned up his day-book, and added, "some word it seems had reached Scott, that Maturin, the Irish poet, was lying in prison for a small debt, and here have I, by Mr Scott's orders, been obliged to transmit him a bill of exchange for sixty pounds, and Maturin is never to know from whom or whence it came." I have said it oft, and now say it again for the last time, that those who knew Scott only from the few hundreds, or I might say, hundreds of thousands of volumes to which he has given birth and circulation through the world, knew only one-half of the man and that not the best half either. As a friend, he was sometimes stern, but always candid and sincere, and I always found his counsels of the highest value, if I could have followed them. I was indebted to him for the most happy and splendid piece of humorous ballad poetry which I ever wrote. He said to me one day, after dinner, "It was but very lately, Mr Hogg, that I was drawn by our friend Kirkpatrick Sharpe to note the merits of your ballad, *The Witch of Fife*. There never was such a thing written for genuine and ludicrous humour, but why in the name of wonder did you suffer the gude auld man to be burnt skin and bone by the English at Carlisle? (for, in the first and second editions, that was the issue.) I never saw a piece *of such bad taste* in all my life. What had the

poor old carl done to deserve such a fate? Only taken a drappy o' drink too much, at another man's expense; which you and I have done often. It is a finale which I cannot bear, and you *must* bring off the old man, by some means or other, no matter how extravagant or ridiculous in such a ballad as yours; but by all means bring off the fine old fellow, for the present termination of the ballad is one which I cannot brook." I went home, and certainly brought off the old man with flying colours, which is by far the best part of the ballad. I never adopted a suggestion of his, either in prose or verse, which did not improve the subject. He knew mankind well. He knew the way to the human heart, and he certainly had the art of leading the taste of an empire, I may say, of a world, above all men that ever existed. As long as Sir Walter Scott wrote poetry, there was neither man nor woman ever thought of either reading or writing any thing but poetry. But the instant that he gave over writing poetry, there was neither man nor woman ever read it more! All turned to tales and novels, which I, among others, was reluctantly obliged to do. Yes, I was obliged, from the tide, the irresistible current that followed him, to forego the talent which God had given me at my birth, and enter into a new sphere with which I had no acquaintance. The world of imagination had been opened wide to me, but the world

of real life I knew nothing of. Sir Walter knew it, in all its shades and gradations, and could appreciate any singular character at once. He had a clear head, as well as a benevolent heart; was a good man; an anxiously kind husband; an indulgent parent; and a sincere, forgiving friend; a just judge, and a punctual correspondent. I believe that he answered every letter sent to him, either from rich or poor, and generally not very shortly. Such is the man we have lost, and such a man we shall never see again. He was truly an extraordinary man;—the greatest man in the world. What are kings or emperors compared with him? Dust and sand! And, unless when connected with literary men, the greater part of their names either not remembered at all, or only remembered with detestation. But here is a name, which, next to that of William Shakspeare, will descend with rapt admiration to all the ages of futurity. And is it not a proud boast for an old shepherd, that, for thirty years, he could call this man friend, and associate with him every day and hour that he chose?

Yes, it is my proudest boast. Sir Walter sought me out in the wilderness, and attached himself to me before I had ever seen him, and, although I took cross fits with him, his interest in me never subsided for one day or one moment. He never scrupled to let me know that I behoved to depend *entirely on myself* for my success in life, but at the

same time, always assured me that I had talents to ensure that success, if properly applied and not suffered to run to waste. I was always received in his house like a brother, and he visited me on the same familiar footing. I never went into the inner house of Parliament, where he sat, on which he did not rise and come to me, and conduct me to a seat in some corner of the outer house, where he would sit with me two or three minutes. I am sorry to think that any of his relations should entertain an idea that Sir Walter undervalued me, for of all men I ever met with, not excepting the noblemen and gentlemen in London, there never was a gentleman paid more deference to me than Sir Walter ; and although many of my anecdotes are homely and common-place ones, I am sure there is not a man in Scotland who appreciates his value more highly or reveres his memory more.

With regard to his family, I have not much to say, for I know but little. Sophia was a baby, when I first visited him, about two or three months old, and I have watched her progress ever since. By the time she had passed beyond the years of infancy, I perceived that she was formed to be the darling of such a father's heart, and so it proved. She was a pure child of nature, without the smallest particle of sophistication in her whole composition. And then, she loved her father so. O ! how dearly she loved him ! I shall never forget

the looks of affection that she would throw up to him as he stood leaning on his crutch, and hanging over her at the harp, as she chaunted to him his favourite old Border Ballads, or his own wild Highland gatherings. Whenever he came into a room where she was, her countenance altered, and she often could not refrain from involuntary laughter. She is long ago a wife and mother herself, but I am certain she will always cherish the memory of the most affectionate of fathers.

Walter is a fine manly, gentlemanly fellow, without pride or affectation, but without the least spark of his father's genius that I ever could discern, and for all the literary company that he mixed with daily in his youth, he seemed always to hold literature, and poetry in particular, in very low estimation. He was terribly cast down at his father's death. I never saw a face of such misery and dejection, and though I liked to see it, yet I could not help shedding tears on contemplating his features, thinking of the jewel that had fallen from his crown.

I always considered Anne, as the cleverest of the family ; shrewd, sensible, and discerning, but I believe a little of a satirist, for I know that when a mere girl, her associates were terrified for her. Charles is a queer chap, and will either make a spoon or spoil a good horn.

Of Lockhart's genius and capabilities, Sir Wal-

ter always spoke with the greatest enthusiasm, more than I thought he deserved, for I knew him a great deal better than Sir Walter did, and whatever Lockhart may pretend, I knew Sir Walter a thousand times better than he did. There is no man now living who knew Scott's character so thoroughly in all its bearings as William Laidlaw did. He was his land steward, his amanuensis, and managed the whole of his rural concerns and improvements, for the period of twenty years, and sorry am I that the present Sir Walter did not find it meet to keep Laidlaw on the estate, for without him, that dear-bought and classical property will be like a carcase without a head. Laidlaw's head made it. He knows the value of every acre of land on it to a tithe, and of every tree in the forest, with the characters of all the neighbours and retainers. He was to be sure a subordinate, but Sir Walter always treated him as a friend, inviting Mrs Laidlaw and him down to every party where there was any body he thought Laidlaw would like to meet, and Sir Walter called on Mrs Laidlaw once or twice every day when he was in the country. I have seen him often pop in to his breakfast and take his salt herring and tea with us there, with as much ease and good humour, as if he had come into his brother's house. He once said to me as we were walking out about Abbotslee, and I was so much interested in the speech, that I am

sure I can indite it word by word, for Laidlaw was one of my earliest and dearest friends.

“Was it not an extraordinary chance for me that threw Laidlaw into my hands? Without Laidlaw’s head I could have done nothing, and to him alone I am indebted for all these improvements. I never found a mind so inexhaustible as Laidlaw’s. I have met with many of the greatest men of our country, but uniformly found, that, after sounding them on one or two subjects, there their information terminated. But with the worst of all manners of expression, Laidlaw’s mind is inexhaustible. Its resources seem to be without end. Every day, every hour, he has something new, either of theory or experiment, and he sometimes abuses me like a tinker because I refuse to follow up his insinuations.”

Another day he said to me, “You know I recommended your friend Laidlaw, last year to Lord Mansfield as his factor, but was obliged to withdraw my recommendation and give his lordship a hint to relinquish his choice. For in the first place I was afraid that Laidlaw’s precarious health might unfit him for such a responsible situation ; and more than that, I found that I could not live without him, and was obliged, maugre all misfortunes, to replace him in his old situation.” I therefore wish, from my heart and soul, that matters could have been so arranged, that Laidlaw should not

have been separated from Abbotsford ; for though my own brother has long had and still has a high responsibility as shepherd and superintendent of the enclosures, I cannot see how the management of the estate can go on without Laidlaw. Under the law agents it will both cost more and go to ruin, and I say again, without Laidlaw, that grand classical estate is a carcase without a head.

Whenever Sir Walter spoke of either of his two sons, which he frequently did, it was always in a jocular way, to raise a laugh at their expense. His description of Walter, when he led in Mrs Lockhart a bride, with his false mustachios and whiskers, was a source of endless amusement to him. He was likewise wont often to quote some of Charles's wise sayings, which, in the way that he told them, never failed to set the table in a roar of laughter.

Sir Walter had his caprices like other men, and when in poor health was particularly cross, but I always found his heart in the right place, and that he had all the native feelings and generosity of a man of true genius. I am ashamed to confess that his feelings for individual misfortune, were far more intense than my own. There was one day that I went in to breakfast with him as usual, when he said to me with eyes perfectly staring, " Good Heaven ! Hogg, have you heard what has happened ? "

"Na, no that I ken o', what is it that ye allude to, Mr Scott?"

"That our poor friend Irving has cut his throat last night or this morning, and is dead."

"O, ay! I heard o' that," said I, with a coldness that displeased him. "But I never heedit it, for the truth is that Irving was joost like the Englishman's fiddle; the warst fault that he had, he was useless. Irving could never have done any good either for himself, his family, or any other leevin' creature."

"I don't know, Mr Hogg, what that poor fellow might have done, with encouragement. This you must at least acknowledge, that if he did not write genuine poetry, he came the nearest to it of any man that ever failed." These were Sir Walter's very words, and I record them in memory of the hapless victim of despair and disappointed literary ambition. He farther added, "For me, his melancholy fate has impressed me so deeply, and deranged me so much, that it will be long before I can attend to anything again."

He abhorred all sorts of low vices and blackguardism with a perfect detestation. There was one Sunday when he was riding down Yarrow, in his carriage, attended by several gentlemen on horseback, and I being among them went up to the carriage door, and he being our Sheriff, I stated *to him* with the deepest concern that there was at

that moment a cry of *murder* from the Broadmeadows wood, and that Will Watherston was murdering Davie Brunton. "Never you regard that, Hogg," said he, with rather a stern air, and without a smile on his countenance. "If Will Watherston murders Davie Brunton, and be hanged for the crime, it is the best thing that can befall to the parish—drive on, Peter."

He was no great favourer of sects, and seldom or never went to church. He was a complete and finished aristocrat, and the prosperity of the state was his great concern, which prosperity he deemed lost unless both example and precept flowed by regular gradation from the highest to the lowest. He dreaded religion as a machine by which the good government of the country might be deranged, if not uprooted. There was one evening when he and Marrit of Rokeby, some of the Fergusons, and I, were sitting over our wine, that he said, "There is nothing that I dread so much as a very religious woman; she is not only a dangerous person, but a perfect shower-bath on all social conviviality. The enthusiasm of our Scottish ladies has now grown to such a height that I am almost certain it will lead to some dangerous revolution in the state. And then, to try to check it would only make the evil worse. If you ever choose a wife, Hogg, for goodness' sake, as you value your own happiness, don't choose a *very* religious one."

He had a settled impression on his mind that a revolution was impending over this country, even worse than we have experienced, and he was always keeping a sharp look-out on the progress of enthusiasm in religion, as a dangerous neighbour. There was one day, that he and Laidlaw were walking in the garden at Abbotsford, during the time that the western portion of the mansion-house was building. The architect's name, I think, was Mr Paterson.

"Well, do you know, Laidlaw," said Scott, "that I think Paterson one of the best natured, shrewd sensible fellows, that I ever met with. I am quite delighted with him, for he is a fund of continual amusement to me. If you heard but how I torment him ! I attack him every day on the fundamental principles of his own art. I take a position which I know to be false, and persist in maintaining it, and it is truly amazing with what good sense and good nature he supports his principles. I really like Paterson exceedingly."

"O he's a verra fine fellow," said Laidlaw. "An extraordinary fine fellow, an' has a great deal o' comings an' gangings in him. But dinna ye think, Mr Scott, that it's a great pity he should hae been a preacher?"

"A preacher?" said Scott, staring at him, "Good Lord ! what do you mean?"

"Aha ! It's a' ye ken about it !" said Laidlaw,

"I assure you, he's a preacher, an' a capital preacher too. He's reckoned the best baptist preacher in a' Galashiels, an' preaches every Sunday to a great community o' low kind o' folks."

On hearing this, Sir Walter, (then Mr Scott,) wheeled about and halted off with a swiftness Laidlaw had never seen him exercise before; exclaiming vehemently to himself, "Preaches! D—— him!" From that time forth, his delightful colloquies with Mr Paterson ceased.

There was another time at Abbotsford, when some of the Sutherland family, (for I don't remember the English title,) and many others were there, that we were talking of the Earl of Buchan's ornamental improvements at Dryburgh, and among other things, of the colossal statue of Wallace, which I rather liked and admired, but which Sir Walter perfectly abhorred, he said these very words. "If I live to see the day when the men of Scotland, like the children of Israel, shall every one do that which is right in his own eyes, *which I am certain either I or my immediate successors will see*, I have settled in my own mind long ago what I shall do first. I'll go down and blow up the statue of Wallace with gun-powder. Yes, I shall blow it up in such style, that there shall not be one fragment of it left! the horrible monster!" He had a great veneration for the character of Sir William Wallace, and I have often heard him eulo-

giss it. He said to me one morning long ago, when Miss Porter's work, *The Scottish Chiefs*, first appeared, "I am grieved about this work of Miss Porter! I cannot describe to you how much I am disappointed, I wished to think so well of it; and I do think highly of it as a work of genius. But, Lord help her! her Wallace is no more our Wallace, than Lord Peter is, or King Henry's messenger to Percy Hotspur. It is not safe meddling with the hero of a country, and, of all others, I cannot bear to see the character of Wallace frittered away to that of a fine gentleman."

Sir Walter was the best formed man I ever saw, and, laying his weak limb out of the question, a perfect model of a man for gigantic strength. The muscles of his arms were prodigious. I remember of one day long ago, I think it was at some national dinner in Oman's Hotel, that at a certain time of the night, a number of the young heroes differed prodigiously with regard to their various degrees of muscular strength. A general measurement took place around the shoulders and chest, and I, as a particular judge in these matters, was fixed on as the measurer and umpire. Scott, who never threw cold water on any fun, submitted to be measured with the rest. He measured most round the chest, and to their great chagrin, I was next to him, and very little short. But when I came to examine the arms, Sir Walter's had

double the muscular power of mine, and very nearly so of every man's who was there! I declare, that from the elbow to the shoulder, they felt as if he had the strength of an ox.

There was a gentleman once told me that he walked into Sir Walter's house, in Castle-street, just as the footman was showing another gentleman out, and that, being an intimate acquaintance, he walked straight into Sir Walter's study, where he found him stripped, with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, and his face very red. "Good Heaven, Scott, what is the matter?" said the intruder. "Pray, may I ask an explanation of this? "Why, the truth is, that I have just been giving your friend, Mr Martin, a complete drubbing," said Scott laughing. "The scoundrel dared me to touch him but with one of my fingers; but if I have not given him a thorough basting, he knows himself. He is the most impudent and arrant knave I ever knew. But I think it will be a while before he attempts to impose again upon me." This Mr Martin, the gentleman said, was some great picture dealer. But as I never heard Sir Walter mention the feat in his hours of hilarity, I am rather disposed to discredit the story. He was always so reasonable and so prudent, that I hardly think he would fall on and baste even a knavish picture dealer black and blue, in his own study. The gentleman who told me this is alive,

and will, and may answer for himself in this matter.

Sir Walter in his study, and in his seat in the Parliament house, had rather a dull, heavy appearance, but in company, his countenance was always lighted up, and Chantrey has given the likeness of him there precisely. In his family he was kind, condescending and attentive, but highly imperative. No one of them durst for a moment disobey his orders, and if he began to hang down his eyebrows, a single hint was enough. In every feature of his face decision was strongly marked. He was exactly what I conceive an old Border Baron to have been, with his green jacket, his blue bonnet, his snow-white locks, muscular frame, and shaggy eyebrows.

He was said to be a very careless composer, yet I have seen a great number of his manuscripts, corrected and enlarged on the white page which he alternately left, a plan which I never tried in my life. He once undertook to correct the press for a work of mine, "The Three Perils of Women," when I was living in the country, and when I gave the manuscript to Ballantyne, I said, "Now you must send the proofs to Sir Walter, he is to correct them for me."

"He correct them for you!" exclaimed Ballantyne, "Lord help you and him both! I assure you if he had nobody to correct after him, there would

be a bonny song through the country. He is the most careless and incorrect writer that ever was born, for a voluminous and popular writer, and as for sending a proof sheet to him, we may as well keep it in the office. He never heeds it. No, no, you must trust the correction of the press to my men and me, I shall answer for them, and if I am in a difficulty at any time, I'll apply to Lockhart. He is a very different man, and has the best eye for a corrector, of any gentleman corrector I ever saw. He often sends me an article written off-hand like your own, without the interlineation of a word, or the necessity of correcting one afterwards. But as for Sir Walter, he will never look at either your proofs or his own, unless it be for a minute's amusement."*


The Whig ascendancy in the British Cabinet killed Sir Walter. Yes, I say and aver, it was that which broke his heart, deranged his whole constitution, and murdered him. As I have shown before, a dread of revolution had long preyed on his mind; he withstood it to the last; he fled from it, but it affected his brain, and killed him. From the moment he perceived the veto of a democracy prevailing, he lost all hope of the prosperity and ascendancy of the British empire. He not only lost hope of the realm, but of every individual pertaining to it, as my last anecdote of him will show,

* This must have been "leein' Johnie." See ante p. 112.

for though I could multiply these anecdotes and remarks to volumes, yet I must draw them to a conclusion. They are trivial in the last degree, did they not relate to so great and so good a man. I have depicted him exactly as he was, as he always appeared to me, and was reported by others, and I revere his memory as that of an elder brother.

The last time that I saw his loved and honoured face, was at the little inn on my own farm, in the autumn of 1830. He sent me word that he was to pass on such a day, on his way from Dumlanrig Castle, to Abbotsford, but he was sorry he could not call at Altrive, to see Mrs Hogg and the bairns, it being so far off the way. I accordingly waited at the inn, and handed him out of the carriage. His daughter was with him, but we left her at the inn, and walked slowly down the way as far as Mountbenger-Burn. He then walked very ill indeed, for the weak limb had become almost completely useless, but he leaned on my shoulder all the way, and did me the honour of saying that he never leaned on a firmer or a surer.

We talked of many things, past, present, and to come, but both his memory and onward calculation appeared to me then to be considerably decayed. I cannot tell what it was, but there was something in his manner that distressed me. He often changed the subject very abruptly, and never laughed. He



expressed the deepest concern for my welfare and success in life, more than I had ever heard him do before, and all mixed with sorrow for my worldly misfortunes. There is little doubt, that his own were then preying on his vitals. He told me that which I never knew nor suspected before; that a certain game-keeper, on whom he bestowed his maledictions without reserve, had prejudiced my best friend, the young Duke of Buccleuch, against me, by a story, and though he himself knew it to be a malicious and invidious lie, yet seeing his grace so much irritated he durst not open his lips on the subject, farther than by saying, "But my lord Duke, you must always remember that Hogg is no ordinary man, although he may have shot a stray moorcock." And then turning to me he said, "Before you had ventured to give any saucy language to a low scoundrel of an English game-keeper, you should have thought of Fielding's tale of Black George."*

"I never saw that tale," said I, "an' dinna ken ought about it. But never trouble your head about that matter, Sir Walter, for it is awthegither out o' nature for our young chief to entertain ony animosity against me. The thing will never mair

* And yet Scott could bow down and worship this boy idiot—the plaything of a rascally game keeper—who valued a moorfowl more than a poet—because he was a Duke!

be heard of, an' the chap that tauld the less on me will gang to hell, that's aye some comfort."

I wanted to make him laugh, but I could not even make him smile. "You are still the old man, Hogg, careless and improvident as ever," said he, with a countenance as gruff and demure as could be.

Before we parted I mentioned to him my plan of trusting an edition of my prose tales, in twenty volumes, to Lockhart's editing. He disapproved of the plan decidedly, and said, "I would not for anything in the world, that Lockhart should enter on such a responsibility, for taking your random way of writing into account, the responsibility would be a very heavy one—ay, and a dangerous one too!" Then turning half round, leaning on his crutch, and fixing his eyes on the ground for a long space, he said, "You have written a great deal that might be made available, Hogg, with proper attention. And I am sure that one day or other, it will be made available to you or your family. But in my opinion, this is not the proper season. I wish you could drive off the experiment until the affairs of the nation are in better keeping, for at present all things, and literature in particular, are going straight down-hill to destruction and ruin." And then he mumbled something to himself, which I took to be an inward curse. I say again, and I am certain of it, that the demo-

cratic ascendancy, and the grievous and shameful insults he received from the populace of his own country, broke the heart of, and killed the greatest man that ever that country contained.*

When I handed him into the coach that day, he said something to me which, in the confusion of parting, I forgot; and though I tried to recollect the words the next minute, I could not, and never could again. It was something to the purport that it was likely it would be long, ere he leaned as far on my shoulder again, but there was an expression in it, conveying his affection for me, or his interest in me, which has escaped my memory for ever.

This is my last anecdote of my most sincere and esteemed friend. After this I never saw him again. I called twice at Abbotsford, during his last illness, but they would not let me see him, and I did not at all regret it, for he was then reduced to the very lowest state of weakness, to which poor prostrate humanity could be subjected. He was described to me by one who saw him often, as exactly in the same state with a man mortally drunk, who could in nowise own or assist himself; the pressure of the abscess on the brain having apparently the same effect as the fumes of drunkenness. He could, at short intervals, distinguish individuals, and pronounce a few intelligible words; but then

* Bravo Hogg.

lucid glimpses were of short duration, the sunken eye soon ceased again from distinguishing objects, and the powerless tongue became unable to utter a syllable, though constantly attempting it, which made the sound the most revolting that can be conceived.

I am sure heaven will bless Lockhart, for his attention to the illustrious sufferer. The toil and the watching that he patiently endured, one would have thought was beyond human nature to have stood, and yet I never saw him look better or healthier all the while. He will not miss his reward. I followed my friend's sacred remains to his last narrow house, remained the last man at the grave, and even then, left it with reluctance.

Omnes eodem cogimur : omnium
Versatur urna, serius, ocyus
Sors exitura.*

* Saul among the prophets! Hogg quoting Latin!



GLASGOW:

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